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To my very dear friend  
Dr. and Mrs. M. Aronson  
with my very best wishes  
Wm J. Richardson

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# A CLERGYMAN'S SON AND DAUGHTER

BY  
WILLIAM J. ROBINSON, M.D

*Author of Never Told Tales, Stories of Love and Life, Married Life and Happiness, Eugenics and Marriage, Sexual Problems of Today, Birth Control or the Limitation of Offspring, Woman: Her Sex and Love Life, Sex Knowledge for Men and Boys, etc.*

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## A CLERGYMAN'S SON AND DAUGHTER

### I.

THE village idler most people called him; the least charitable referred to him as the village loafer; but a few of the elect who were permitted to get an intimate glimpse of his inner life considered him an impractical dreamer. Some even called him a sage. An idler he may have been; a loafer he certainly was not. He came, it was said, from a well-to-do family; some rumors had it, a rich and prominent family. How and why he drifted into this suburb of New York millionaires nobody knew; where he lived but few knew; his living, such as it was, he made by desultory jobs at gardening. Now and then he would do a day's or half a day's work mowing lawns, tending to flowers—the only things still unspoiled and worth while, he would say—and the wage received would suffice to support him for

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several days, perhaps for a week. His needs were few. "Nobody is a free man whose needs are many"—he used to say. "I want to be as free as a bird. Not to work when I don't want to, to sing when I want to, and to change my location when I have a mind to."

His right name nobody knew. He used to amuse himself by writing little things, most of them unpublished, which he would sign Freebird; by this name he became known to his friends, and gradually the nom de plume became his only name, by which the people in the village and surrounding country would refer to him. The name stuck because it fitted. I might add, that the articles of clothing he wore were rather scanty in number; from April to October he wore neither shoes nor stockings, and he walked bare-headed both summer and winter.

The respectable citizens of both sexes considered him unbalanced and rather indecent for walking about so scantily clad; but this he did not mind. Even one or two of his friends argued with him, but to no avail. "I will never be a 'respecta-

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ble,' " was his answer; "a collar chokes me and a hat and shoes annoy me. Why should I give the philistines the satisfaction to dress the way they do?" That ended the argument, and Freebird stretched his wiry body on the floor of his shack, which stood isolated on the outskirts of the town, and resumed his reading. The little volume which he held in his hands was a paper-covered collection of Heine's poems.

From his earliest childhood, he believed from his very infancy, Freebird had a hobby, or one might say more correctly, a passion. He used to love to see the trains come and go. It filled him with a peculiar sort of thrill, with an undefinable but pleasurable excitement. When he grew up he felt somewhat ashamed of his passion or hobby, but as it hurt nobody, and as he had plenty of time to dispose of, and as he was freer than the wealthiest of the millionaires in this select and elect town-village, he would often be found, around train time, sitting on the platform, watching the rushing train, and examining and making inward comments on the

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outgoing and incoming passengers. Very many people have this train passion, in varying degrees.

The setting sun was, with an invisible brush, painting the Western sky a million gorgeous colors, when the "dinner express" pulled in and discharged its cargo of millionaires and other successful business and professional men. Happy, satisfied faces. Evidently, every one of them belongs to the "arrived" ones. Not a failure, not an unhappy individual among them. Not one? Perhaps the Rev. Brompton is not so very successful; at any rate not so very happy. And as Freebird notices him walking with his head bent, leaning heavily on his cane, he murmurs: How have the mighty fallen! Dr. Morley passes in his machine; rather reservedly he offers the Rev. Brompton to give him a lift, but just as reservedly the Rev. Brompton thanks him and says he prefers to walk. "And they were the closest friends in Midvalia. Do any friendships last forever?"

The last passenger, somewhat puffed up, also somewhat puffy and pouchy, is

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comfortably seated in his Packard, and is driven off by his smartly dressed chauffeur, and Freebird removes some gravel that got between his toes, and wends his way to what he calls his home. He feels sure that he will enjoy a better night's sleep than will the Rev. Brompton.

Perhaps no sleep will visit Dr. Brompton's pillow tonight at all.

## II.

The Reverend John Harding Brompton was a commanding figure. Six feet four inches in height, his physical appearance alone would attract attention in any gathering. As an orator he was well known in more than one diocese, and he was in frequent demand as an after-dinner speaker, at commencements and even at important political gatherings. A staunch Republican, he was a standpatter in politics as he was in religion. The Rev. Brompton was respected and admired, but it can hardly be said truthfully that he was loved by anybody—not even by the members of his own family. He was

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severe in his judgments, believed in no compromise with sin, and considered forgiveness a weakness. For a sinner or a criminal to escape punishment for his sin or crime was, in his opinion, a crime against nature—as well as against society. He considered himself, and was considered by others, incorruptibly honest and impartially just. Freebird once said that he would rather be a tramp or a thief than the Rev. Brompton, but Freebird, you know, was somewhat unbalanced in his judgments. Yes, the Rev. Brompton was considered one of the most highly esteemed citizens of New York and Midvalia. And yet as he entered his fine suburban home, it was as if a black shadow fell over everything and everybody assembled in the living room. Not that things were bright and cheerful in that room before he came in; but the gloom which enveloped his wife and his two young daughters seemed to become several degrees denser.

His wife, Anna, a colorless, timid, shrunk and shrinking little woman, turned her face to him hesitatingly, question-

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ingly, but his attitude gave her no encouragement, and she seemed to shrink still further into herself, and the tragedy in her face became still more accentuated. "My poor boy, my poor boy," she murmured, but she said it in a low inward voice, for she knew that her husband resented any demonstrations of weakness; he detested women's tears, and was impatient with any sort of complaint.

Malvina, the eldest daughter, hardly turned when her father came in; she was engrossed in the reading of a book, and it was evident that the arrival of her father afforded her very little pleasure. Luella, the younger daughter, looked up from her lesson book, but when she saw from her father's face that he had no news to impart, she went on with her work. The dinner bell rang; none of the family had any appetite, but as a matter of habit, and for the sake of the servants, they went into the dining room. The dinner was a gloomy affair; hardly a word was exchanged, and before the last course was over, Mrs. Brompton, unable to restrain herself any longer, broke out into



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sobs and, hurriedly leaving the table, rushed up into her room. The other members of the family soon followed.

The briefest sojourn in the home of the Rev. Brompton would have made it clear to any stranger that the family had been dealt a severe blow; that a tragedy was hovering about, but that the final phase had not been reached yet; the final blow had not been struck; hope had not been entirely given up.

### III.

The Rev. Brompton was now in his sixty-sixth year. Well preserved, straight and vigorous, he looked ten years younger than his age—up to a few months ago. Now he looked older than his age. Up to a few months ago he was considered and he considered himself one of the most successful and most envied clergymen in the United States. His economic position, as well as his social and professional standing, was secure. And suddenly things began to go wrong, and the domestic structure that he had built up so

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laboriously seemed in danger of coming down, of tumbling about his head. Of all his children there was only one, Frank, the oldest, for whom he cared deeply, to whom he felt strongly attached, on whom he built great hopes.

Frank was born after his parents had been married ten years; there had been five or six stillbirths; the doctors who were consulted held out little hope of Mrs. Brompton being able to bring a living healthy child into the world. But on the advice of one of the physicians, a young specialist was consulted, who subjected Mrs. Brompton to some vigorous sort of treatment, kept her in bed for several months—and a living healthy child, Frank, was the result. The specialist said that great care would have to be taken in bringing up the child, who was to take a prescribed course of medicine for several months, but contrary to expectations Frank developed into a vigorous, wide-awake boy. Besides the regular school and a private tutor, the father devoted a good deal of his time to the boy and his studies. The father did not believe in

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idleness, in games and pleasure; his idea was that every minute of a boy's time must be occupied in hard mental work. That was the only way in which a boy could learn something worth while, and what was just as, if not more, important, the only way in which he could be kept *clean* and away from mischief and temptation.

And poor little Frank was worked hard, almost every minute of the day. When other boys played ball or skated, Frank was worrying over Ovid or Virgil or memorizing the irregular Greek verbs. When Dr. Morley, a neighbor of the Bromptons, protested against working the boy so hard, the father replied that it did not seem to hurt him, but he yielded to the extent of allowing Frank an hour's walk, daily, under careful supervision. And under no circumstances was he permitted to stay in bed longer than eight hours. When he reached the age of twelve, the number of hours of sleep was cut from eight to seven; and no matter how sleepy Frank may have felt, how much his mother may have pleaded to

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permit the boy to sleep a little longer, he had to jump out of bed, and jump right into the cold tub. The Rev. Brompton said he believed in a Spartan bringing up, and he did not want any weaklings. He would rather have no children at all than have mollicoddles. He believed that the flesh needed frequent chastising. And yet, as sitting now in the easy chair of his study, he visualizes little Frankie at the age of ten or eleven leaving his warm bed and jumping into the cold bath, from which he came out all shivering, he cannot prevent his conscience from giving him a rather severe twinge.

When Frank reached puberty, when he was thirteen or fourteen years old, his father became a very hard taskmaster indeed. It would be literally true to say that he was not permitted to spend an hour in idleness or without supervision. He was accompanied to and from school, and special pains were taken by the father to prevent his son from coming in contact, in the slightest degree, with members of the female sex. His *horror feminae*, as far as Frank was concerned, seemed to

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be a real obsession. He seemed to fear that not only the touch of feminine lips, even the touch of a feminine hand would contaminate Frank, would set his senses on fire—even as it did his own when he was Frank's age. It was all well meant. He wanted to save Frank the temptations which he had to fight. He wanted to save him, if he could, from the unhealthy habits, from the terrible struggles which had almost used up every bit of his energy and had threatened more than once to overwhelm and to drown him.

So carefully and effectively was Frank guarded that he reached his majority without having once experienced the thrill of a feminine touch. He had vague longings, unexplainable yearnings stirred within him—but he refused to heed them, to ponder over them, to try to explain them. He knew it was something shameful, something ungodly; so he crushed his desires and his longings, and proceeded with his old and new testaments, with his Latin and his Greek, with his German and his French.

IV.

As Frank looked back on the twenty-one years behind him, he found nothing whatever to rejoice over in his life. Just a desert—a dull, drab desert—a desert without an oasis.

Yes, one little oasis in his young life. When he was sixteen years old, his father and mother, his sister Malvina and himself, went on a European trip. They were gone about five months and that was the only incident in his life that Frank remembered with pleasure, that he used to like to revert to on the rare occasions of his day-dreams, and of which he now and then dreamed at night. It was the only time that he saw his father unbend, to drop his stern dignity and to act as he saw other fathers act. It was the only time that he remembered his father take his hand and walk with him like he saw other fathers walk with their children. And they never tired of walking and seeing the sights.

Even the poor mother, who was always slighted and treated by her husband with

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polite contempt, straightened out, lost some of her timidity, and actually dared to speak to the Rev. Brompton as to an equal, because on this trip he treated her gently, and seemed to be always in good humor. Malvina was also happy, and this trip constituted her one happy memory.

The two months that they spent in Munich were the happiest in their lives. In the *Pension* in which they lived there was a German family with two children about Frank's and Malvina's ages. Rudolph and Marie were their names and the four became close friends. They were inseparable—Frank and Malvina were glad to have a chance to practice German, Rudolph and Marie were glad of the opportunity to improve the pronunciation of their English. Soon the desire for linguistic improvement gave way to a deeper feeling. They did not know what the feeling was, but they knew that they were happy in each other's presence. When Marie Auerbach would raise her soft liquid eyes to Frank, an indescribable thrill would go through him. But he was shy and awkward in her presence and he

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was too "properly" brought up ever to attempt to touch her little hand. And Rudolph Auerbach was, if possible, even more shy in the presence of his American goddess. But Malvina felt that nothing would give her such supreme happiness as to be able to fondle and kiss Rudolph's blond locks. But that was an unattainable dream. It was forbidden. Not legally, but morally—*strengstens verboden*.

Time passed rapidly. It is one of the numberless tragedies of human life: a pleasurable time flies on wings, a wretched painful time drags along on leaden feet and it seems as if it would never be over. When Mr. Brompton made the casual remark at the table that in forty-eight hours they would be on their way for home, the children felt as if they were on the eve of a great catastrophe. Their faces darkened and the rest of the meal was left untouched. And when the time came to say good-bye, they all felt as if their hearts would break; their souls were on the rack, but they could not give vent to their feelings; the parents were with them and the father would have considered any



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demonstration foolish, undignified and childish.

Childish! How stupid and forgetful adults are not to know that children can go through the deepest agonies of suffering! How stupid of them to imagine that only adults can experience real feelings, and that only the feelings of adults are entitled to consideration. Frank felt that he would joyfully give up his life for the extasy of embracing Marie. But he did not possess the courage to do it. The inhibition produced by an early education is often too powerful to be overcome by the strongest desires, the most powerful efforts. And so Frank and Marie parted without the exchange of a kiss. They just shook hands, but in the slight hand pressure which they exchanged their souls seemed to be fused into one, and without exchanging a word they knew that they loved each other for life. Malvina succeeded in whispering a word to Rudolph, and when they met a little later in the hall she put her arms around his neck, their lips met, and the supremest joy of which human beings are capable was

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theirs.

The homeward journey was a far different affair from the voyage that carried them abroad. The children felt unhappy—as if a part of their being had been amputated and left behind. The mother was ailing, and the father was again enveloped in his stern clerical dignity. He was distant and curt. That is usually the case and has been frequently noted by those travelling to and from Europe. Those who on their trip to Europe had unbent and were jolly and quite human, would on their journey home become distant, severe and grouchy. The psychology is not a difficult one to interpret. Consciously or subconsciously the American who goes to Europe knows or feels that he goes for a rest, for a vacation, that he has thrown off business or professional affairs and is going for the purpose of enjoying himself; this has an effect on his conduct, and he does behave pleasantly, kindly, sometimes even beautifully childishly. On the way home the traveler feels that he is approaching his daily work which is often an unpleasant grind or soul-deadening

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drudgery; and this alone puts him in a bad, prosaic mood. Yes, the journey home was not a pleasant one, and on the second or third day after their arrival home, the father told Frank that he would have to work hard now to make up for the time lost on the European trip.

The Brompton and the Auerbach children kept up at first a regular and frequent correspondence. Gradually, however, the letters became infrequent and then Marie ceased to write altogether. Several of Frank's and Malvina's letters to her remained unanswered. In a frenzy of excitement Frank begged Rudolph to tell him the cause of Marie's silence. After some delay the answer came: Marie was dead. Soon after the Bromptons' return to America Marie began to ail; she lost flesh perceptibly, became very anemic, then she began to cough and though everything possible was done for her—her mother had gone with her to Davos, in Switzerland—she kept going down, until she wasted away to nothing. She kept on saying first to Rudolph, then also to her mother that she knew she would get

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well, if she could only see Frank. Perhaps she would have. She died with Frank's name on her lips.

### V.

The blow to Frank was staggering. His life was a complete void. He became listless, completely lost his appetite, and was unable and unwilling to attend to his studies. When his father reproached him for his idleness, he told him to leave him alone. It was the first time in his life that Frank was rude or curt to his father. It was the first time in his life that his spirit rebelled and that he openly demonstrated his rebelliousness. Under ordinary circumstances, he would have received a reprimand, a long lecture, or something worse. But the Rev. Brompton looked into his son's face and decided to leave him alone. He was no fool.

Things began to go badly with Frank. Even a dull observer could see that the boy was suffering deeply. His worst trouble was his severe insomnia; many a night he would pass without closing an eye; when he would fall asleep, his sleep

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would be disturbed by strange dreams and nightmares, from which he would wake trembling and bathed in cold perspiration. He began to suffer with intense headaches, which were not relieved by any headache powders, pills or capsules. He was becoming a confirmed melancholiac. The parents were becoming alarmed and asked their friend and neighbor, Dr. George Morley, to give the boy a painstaking examination, and see what could be done for him. Dr. Morley could find nothing definite. "Just run down." To find a sexual or emotional cause for a patient's illness—Dr. George Morley was a competent general practitioner, but he had not been taught to look thus deeply for causes of disease; neither his college curriculum, nor his medical journals or books dealt much with the finer, psychological points of the causes and treatment of disease. He prescribed tonics and stimulants, hypnotics and sedatives, he ordered a highly nutritious diet, cold baths and exercises—all to no avail. Frank was going down hill. His insomnia and headaches yielded to no treatment, and they

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weakened him and dulled his brain so, that with the best of will he was unable to continue his studies.

### VI.

A year passed.

It is hard to say what would have happened to Frank, if Dr. Morley's only daughter, Helen, had not just then returned from the convent where she had spent the past three years. Frank remembered Helen as a sweet gawky girl in short dresses, and now, though she was only twenty, he saw in her a sweet, happy young woman, full of sympathy and understanding. Helen always had a secret liking for Frank, looking up to him as to a superior being, and now when she found the condition he was in, she felt profoundly interested. She sought his company at every proper opportunity, and asked him to let her help him. He was grateful to her for her interest; he was so much in need of sympathy, and her words and occasional touch of her hand acted on him like a soothing, healing balm; figuratively and literally her pres-

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ence became his curative medicine. He began to improve physically and mentally; the feeling of despair, emptiness and uselessness-of-it-all left him. He began to sleep well, his appetite came back and he again took an interest in his studies. Helen glowed with happiness. For she knew, and Frank knew, and their families knew, that it was she who worked that miraculous transformation in him.

The two families looked with favor on the growing intimacy between Frank and Helen. And even Freebird, who was a severe critic and would make gloomy prognostications—to himself—as to the outcome of many approaching marriages, approved of this match. "It is all right, Frank," he said. "You are making no mistake, and you have my blessing. Helen is a fine girl. Too good for this philistine burg." Freebird had known and approved of Marie, but he believed that Helen would make a more satisfactory, a more complete mate.

It was during a long walk in the evening in the woods that they declared their eternal love for each other. The engage-

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ment was soon publicly announced. Frank felt that at last he had reached the haven of rest and peace, and for the first time in his life he felt the taste of real happiness—happiness without a string to it. For the first time in his life he could love openly and could spend as much time as he wanted with the object of his love. His father did not believe in long engagements; and it was decided that the wedding should take place in five or six months.

About a month before the day appointed for the wedding Frank again began to ail. His headaches became unbearable, and he began to suffer with severe pains in his bones, which would get worse at night and disturbed his sleep. He also began to develop open sores on his legs. Helen would have preferred to have the wedding at the appointed time, but here Frank showed that he did possess some will power, though it was for the most part dormant. Ardent as was his desire to possess and to be possessed by Helen, he firmly declared that the wedding must be postponed indefinitely, un-



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til he knew that he was cured. He was not going to become an invalid on his young wife's hands right from the start. He knew her capacity for self-sacrifice, but he was not willing to accept any sacrifices from her. He loved her too much and his sense of masculine chivalry was too great for that. If anybody was to bring a sacrifice it was to be he and not his precious beloved. And though she argued with him that she would be much happier to have him as he was than not to have him at all, on this point he was adamant.

Perhaps he was, unconsciously, somewhat influenced in his decision by some books he had been reading lately. Helen had brought to his notice a department of literature of the very existence of which he had been unaware. And recently his reading had been in unconventional lines. Freebird also called his attention to one or two books which he told him he, as every man contemplating marriage, ought to read.

Dr. Morley again subjected Frank to what he called a thorough examination,

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prescribed external and internal remedies, but the result of the treatment was unsatisfactory. There would be a slight improvement, and then he would be as badly off as before or worse. Finding that he was at the end of his Latin, Dr. Morley overcame his professional pride and decided to send Frank to Dr. X., an eminent specialist in New York. The specialist examined Frank from head to foot, and prescribed for him some drops which had a wonderful effect in relieving his headaches and pains in the bones and in healing up his sores. To the question what exactly was the matter with him, the specialist said that he never discussed with his patients their condition; he would write in detail to Dr. Morley. Frank visited the specialist several times, but the nearest the latter came to giving him the diagnosis of his case, was when he told him that his blood was out of order. But the improvement in his condition was so marked that he did not insist particularly on a scientific diagnosis. He was free from pains, his head was clear, he felt cheerful and buoyant, and soon perhaps

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the intensely longed-for moment of an eternal union with Helen would be his. Helen also felt happy. . . .

### VII.

One day Helen came in running, asking to see Frank. She was trembling like a leaf and seemed to be in the direst distress.

"What is it, Frank?" she asked. "Tell me what is the trouble? I cannot stand it."

"Why, what is the matter, dear? What has happened?" he asked in his turn.

"Don't you know? Father says that our engagement must be broken, that he won't permit me to marry you. He says that I mustn't marry you, neither for my own sake, nor for the sake of any possible children. I begged him and argued with him, but it is of no use. He says that you yourself would refuse to marry me if you knew your condition. I know it can't be, can't be, can't be. It must be a dreadful mistake. . . . And I won't give you up. Nothing in the world will make me

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give you up." And she broke down and sobbed uncontrollably.

"Calm yourself, dear. I myself am in the dark as to what is the matter with me. I have asked the specialist who has been treating me, but he always avoids giving me a straightforward answer. But he said he would write to your father. And I am going over to him now to get the answer." And he went.

When Dr. Morley received the report from Dr. X. telling him what the trouble was with Frank he felt shocked, but he was incredulous. There must be some mistake; of that he was sure. He had known the family almost all their lives, and it was impossible that Frank should be afflicted with such a disease. He wrote to Dr. X., but the report came back that there was no possibility of any mistake. Dr. Morley was not satisfied, and he went over to see Dr. X. in person. He explained to him the standing of the family whose members he had known for so many years; he could vouch for the absolute chastity of Frank, and as to the stern life and principles of the Rev. Brompton

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—they were familiar to everybody. True, the mother had some miscarriages before Frank was born, but that could not have had any significance. It was undoubtedly due to her general weak and rundown condition.

Dr. X. listened attentively and politely to Dr. Morley's explanations. When he got through he said: "I am deeply interested in your explanations, and yet I cannot entertain the slightest doubt as to the correctness of my diagnosis. All signs are corroborative. I know that a mistake is possible, now and then; but if the slightest doubt existed in my mind, the effect of the treatment which I prescribed for him would have removed it. I gave him, as you know, nothing but specific treatment—nothing but mercury and potassium iodide—and you know what rapid improvement in his condition, general and local, that treatment brought about. Can you still doubt?"

Dr. Morley had to admit that Dr. X. was right. "And one more thing," said Dr. X., as Dr. Morley, very much perturbed, was taking leave. "I don't think

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your patient is a fit subject to marry. His improvement may be ever so great, but there is no guarantee that it may not prove only temporary. He may be all right; and he may not. We can hope for the best, but nobody can be certain in such cases that they may not end in general paresis or locomotor ataxia."

Dr. Morley winced, and went home in a very serious, very dejected mood. When Freebird saw Dr. Morley emerge from the train that afternoon his comment was: "Dr. Morley must have a serious case on hand which he knows will prove fatal; but he had made up his mind."

For several days Dr. Morley walked in indecision. Several times he was on the point of calling in Helen. But the task was too painful, and he kept on delaying. Finally he reached a decision. "She is the only thing I have in the world," he said to himself, "and I cannot sacrifice her future, perhaps her life. I know it will be hard on her, but she will understand." . . .

He called her into his study. "You

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know, dear, that I love you, do you not? You know that nothing matters to me so much as does your happiness, do you not?" he commenced, speaking with his head averted.

"Yes, father dear, but what is it? Tell me, please. I have noticed that for the past week or two you have been going about with some secret or sorrow. What is it?"

"It is hard for me to say it, daughter dear. But . . ." and again he turned his head away.

"Now, father, please don't torture me. You will make me imagine something terrible. What is it?"

"Well, I must say it, much as I dislike to do so, but you must give up Frank."

"Give up Frank? What do you mean? You are joking. I'd as lief give up my life. Or do you mean temporarily, until he is well and strong?"

He looked at her sadly. "No, dear, not temporarily, but forever. You must not marry Frank. You can never marry him. He must never marry."

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"But why? What is the matter with him? What has he done? What crime has he committed?"

"He has not done anything. He has not committed any crime, but his health is such that it would not be fair to you, to himself or to any possible future offspring, for him to marry."

"But can you not tell me the name of the disease that Frank is afflicted with? Maybe there is some mistake, maybe he can be cured. My life is at stake, and I have a right to demand not to be kept in the dark."

"No, my daughter, that I cannot tell you. But can't you trust your father? You know that I love you above everything else in the world, and that I would not do anything that is not in your interest."

"Yes, father dear, but in a case like this nobody can decide for me. I have to be the sole judge, and I have to reach my decision with my eyes open. I shall do nothing blindfolded even if the bandage is put over my eyes by my own dear father."



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They argued back and forth for a while. Once or twice he was on the point of telling her the name of the disease, but such were the traditions in which Dr. Morley was brought up, so powerful were the inhibitions, that try as he might, he could not bring himself to pronounce the trisyllabic word. It seemed to him a physical, not merely a psychic, impossibility to pronounce the word syphilis in the presence of a female, and particularly that female his daughter. It was then that Helen ran over to Frank.

### VIII.

When Frank came to see Dr. Morley, Dr. Morley knew that he would have to tell him the truth, that he would stand no subterfuges. And he told him. Frank's face assumed a greenish tinge when he heard what was the matter with him, and for the moment he had to hold on to the edge of the table near which he was standing. And for a time his vocal cords refused to utter the question which he wanted to ask Dr. Morley. But after a

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moment of supreme effort he was himself again.

"But how is it possible?" inquired Frank of Dr. Morley. "You know the life I have been leading. You know, and I can affirm under the most solemn oath, that I have never been near a woman."

"I know," answered Dr. Morley, "and that is what puzzles me. But you have probably heard of what is called in medical parlance *syphilis insontium* or syphilis of the innocent. You may have contracted it from a towel, from a drinking cup, from a barber, from a toilet. . . . It is a great tragedy, and I needn't assure that you have my deepfelt sympathy, but you will agree, that no matter what the mode of infection, you cannot marry Helen. You would not want to risk her health, perhaps her life. It might even be better if" . . . and then he hesitated.

"Better if what?" asked Frank.

"It might be better . . . if you didn't see Helen. . . . While you are not now in an infectious condition, still, you know, it is better to be on the

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safe side. . . . Helen is so young. . . .”

After a man has survived the shock of hearing an irrevocable death sentence pronounced upon him, he becomes strangely free and calm. So we are told. Small interests and picayune affairs vanish into thin air, and nothing seems to matter any more.

“No, Dr. Morley, you need have no fear of my wanting or agreeing to marry Helen. I may be diseased, but my honor has not yet been tarnished. Nor shall it be as long as I live. And my reason remains unclouded. Nor shall I see Helen. It is better so, I agree with you. But you will have to do me the kindness of explaining to her. . . . I could not stand the embarrassment of an explanation and the pain of parting at the same time. Good-bye, Dr. Morley.” And he went.

He locked himself in his room and would see nobody. The parents knew that something had happened, they knew that Frank broke with Helen or *vice versa*, but nobody knew the cause of the rupture. When the Rev. Brompton asked Dr. Morley for information, the

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latter answered that he preferred not to discuss the matter—not just yet. His Helen was sick, locked in her room, refusing to see or to talk to anybody.

## IX.

At the end of three days Frank emerged from his room. He looked more dead than alive, but there was determination in his pale, drawn face. He was determined to find out. . . . First, there still lingered in him some hope. May be, may be. For he had heard or read that the most eminent specialists, the world's greatest physicians, now and then made an error in their diagnosis. Second, if he did have the horrible disease, he wanted to have the satisfaction of finding out, if possible, how he got it. He knew, he was intelligent enough for that, that he could not have gotten the disease in the usual method, nor in any of the unusual methods by which "innocent syphilis" is contracted. He was not shaved by a barber, he did not use anybody else's towel, he never kissed or was kissed by a ques-

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tionable person. In fact, he had never been kissed by anybody except Helen. And she was as pure as newly fallen snow.

No, he could not have gotten the disease in the platitudinous manner, which some physicians put forth as a possibility, merely to cover their ignorance. And then, if he had been infected in some unusual manner, he would have had some local symptoms. He had read enough during the last few days about the disease to know that nobody gets syphilis without experiencing some symptoms. There may be exceptions, but they are extremely rare and he wanted to know if he was one of the rare exceptions. He was sorely puzzled.

And often when Frank was puzzled he consulted Freebird. Freebird had the reputation of being a walking encyclopedia on both close and remote subjects. And his advice, which he never gave, except when asked, usually proved safe, sane and sure. Frank took Freebird into his confidence. He told him the whole sad story, and told him the two points that he was bent upon finding out.

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Freebird listened attentively and sympathetically. "Go and see Dr. Daring. Tell him I sent you. Whatever he tells you, you may rely upon absolutely." Frank asked who Dr. Daring was; his name seemed to him familiar. "Yes, I had given you some time ago one of his books to read. He is a beacon-light in the medical profession. If there were many more like him, the profession would not be in such bad odor with such a large number of people, and the soil of our country would not be so favorable for the numerous unscientific cults and the various sorts of quackery. Unfortunately the medical profession in the United States, while technically skillful enough, is narrow in its outlook and rather unsympathetic towards new ideas. But there are a few exceptions. Dr. Daring is one of the most conspicuous of them. He mixes sympathy and human understanding with his medical knowledge."

## X.

Frank went to see Dr. Daring. He told his history in all its details; not only

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the history of the present trouble, but his entire life history. Dr. Daring listened attentively, making a note now and then. He then examined him minutely, drew some blood from his veins for various tests and told him to come back in one week. "But you will tell me the exact truth, won't you, doctor? It is a matter of life or death, and I must know the truth. I want no concealment. I prefer the truth, bitter as it may be, to any uncertainty. The arrangement of my future life depends upon my knowing the truth. Freebird told me that you would tell me the full truth."

"Oh, yes, I will tell you the truth," said Dr. Daring. "You may depend upon that. I believe that grown-up people should know the truth. Only then can they pursue the proper treatment."

In a week to the hour Frank was in Dr. Daring's office. Dr. Daring's voice was soft and low, but the words came without any hesitation. "You have syphilis in the tertiary stage, and there is no doubt in my mind that you have not contracted the disease."

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"That means" . . . said Frank.

"That means that you were born with it. That you suffer from hereditary syphilis. And you are suffering from the variety that we call *lues hereditaria tarda* or late hereditary syphilis."

Frank jumped to his feet. "I know, Dr. Daring, your standing in the profession. I know that you are not likely to make rash statements. But this is quite impossible. Do you know my father?"

"I have not the pleasure of knowing your father personally, but I have heard of him, and I agree with you, my young friend, that it is difficult, almost impossible to think of your father in connection with any venereal disease. And yet, here are the facts, and I cannot go beyond the facts. Maybe your father—or your mother—was unfortunate enough to contract the disease in some innocent manner."

"You would be willing to stake your professional reputation on the correctness of your statements?" asked Frank.

"Yes, I would," answered Dr. Daring in a low but positive voice.



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Frank broke out in a bitter sardonic laugh.

"To think of it," and he hardly recognized his own voice—"to think of it! To use up every bit of energy in repressing your sex instinct, to fight every manifestation of it in thought and feeling, to sublimate every yearning into hard work, to live an ascetic life in order to come to your wife pure and chaste—and then to find yourself as diseased as the most promiscuous rounder; and thus to lose what is dearer to you than life itself. . . . It is too horrible, too horrible, too horrible. . . . And they talk of a just and merciful God. Where is his justice and where is his mercy?" And again he broke out in a laugh which threatened to become hysterical. Dr. Daring tried to calm him. He said: "We cannot, we must not judge anybody without knowing all the circumstances. . . . You must be charitable and forbearing in judging even your own father."

"And yet it can't be, it can't be. It is too grotesque, too fantastic to think of any venereal disease in connection with

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the Rev. John Harding Brompton. But I shall not rest until I find out the truth. I have nothing to live for. I have lost what is infinitely dearer to me than life itself, and I must know who is responsible for it. . . . I am going to interview my father and get the truth out of him in person."

"You needn't do that," said Dr. Darling.

"Why?"

"Because I have communicated with him. I knew that in spite of all my assurances, a suspicion will still be lurking in your mind, a suspicion that, after all, we may perhaps be mistaken. So I called up your father. I told him what I have found, and stated that it would help matters considerably, if he would be frank with me and tell me if there is a possibility that he may once have been infected in his early youth. At first he felt indignant at what he was obliged to consider an impertinence. But I told him that his unequivocal statement, in the positive or in the negative, would influence my mode of treatment, and consequently, the

course of your disease, and that if he cared for your health and your life, it was his duty to be frank and open with me. He then in a broken and hesitating voice, said that as a young man of twenty or twenty-two he once exposed himself and he feared that he became infected. At least he had some pimples and the doctor gave him mercury. But he never had any symptoms since, and he was sure that he was quite. . . .”

Dr. Daring stopped suddenly in time to catch Frank who was slipping down from his chair in a dead faint. The nervous tension was too great for him, and when he found out definitely what the trouble was, he was unequal to the shock. All the time there was some hope in his subconsciousness; may be, it wasn't that, so that he needn't give up Helen. But when the knowledge of his condition came to him with absolute certainty, when with irrevocable positiveness he perceived in a flash that never would his lips touch Helen's, that never would he hold her in his arms, never, never, never—he collapsed. Dr. Daring brought him to, and sitting by

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his side on the couch he gently patted his forehead and tried to calm him. "You must call to your aid all your nerve force, you must employ all your dormant energy in order to get well."

"Can I get well? Is there any hope of my ever being perfectly well?"

"Perfectly well is a very unsatisfactory expression. It is a question whether, abstractly speaking, anybody ever recovers from a serious illness *perfectly*. But practically speaking, many diseases are recovered from perfectly."

"Would there be any danger of my ever infecting my future wife?"

"N—no. With our present specifics we can practically guarantee to render any luetic non-infectious. This is particularly true of hereditary lues. The question of infection may be practically left out of consideration."

"Well, how about children? Wouldn't there be a danger of the children carrying a taint in their blood?"

Dr. Daring hesitated somewhat before he gave an answer. "Such a possibility is not entirely excluded. Cases of trans-

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mission to the third generation are extremely rare, but they do occur now and then. *Absolute* safety would lie only in not having any children. Many childless couples live a happy and useful life. They sublimate their parental love into humanitarian activities, or they adopt a child. They often do both."

"But I have no right to inflict such limitations on my prospective wife. I fear that she possesses a strong maternal instinct and that she will want to have children of her own. No . . ." Here he suddenly jumped to his feet. "Answer me, doctor, one more question, and I will not trouble you any further. I know that you will answer it truthfully, without any evasions." He hesitated a moment and continued: "Suppose, doctor, you had one daughter who was your most precious possession, would you permit her, if you could prevent it, to marry a man in exactly my physical condition?"

Dr. Daring paled somewhat. And he was silent for a full minute before he answered. "If I did not wish, for the welfare of all concerned, to deal in per-

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fect truthfulness with you, I could avoid answering your question. For you have used an *argumentum ad hominem*, and that is not always fair. But I will answer you, for I want you to act with your eyes open. I should feel unhappy if I had a daughter who was about to marry a man in your physical condition. I should try to dissuade her from the step. Perhaps I should try to prevent her. But, if knowing all the circumstances, aware of all the possible risks and dangers, she insisted upon marrying the man; if she felt that she loved the man so deeply that she would rather live with him with his handicaps than with any other man or without any man at all, I would step aside and let her take the step. And I would do everything in my power to prevent or mitigate any catastrophe which, after all, might never come. But of course I should not feel happy over the fact. I should prefer her to marry a man without any taint."

"Thank you, doctor, that's all I wanted to know. I admire you for your courageous truthfulness. It hurts—but it is better so. . ."

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Frank shook hands with the doctor—Frank's hand felt deathly cold—and falteringly walked out into the darkness. He directed his steps towards the train for home; but after walking distractedly for several blocks, he felt that it would be excruciatingly, unbearably painful for him to see his father and—Helen.

The resentment that he felt towards his father was overwhelming and crushing in its intensity. The bonds of repression which cut into his flesh from his early childhood burst—and he felt a free man—but his freedom mocked him, for it was of no use to him. The resentment turned into a hate so deep, that he was *afraid* to see his father. He was afraid that he might do him some physical injury. As to Helen—he felt himself too weak, too miserable to undergo the ordeal of a farewell scene with her. And if she should insist that that was not to be a farewell—why, that would make matters still harder. No, he could not go back to Midvalia. He was done with it forever. And it was better so.

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### XI.

He turned his steps in the opposite direction, entered a hotel, ordered a room, asked for pen and ink and plenty of writing paper and locked the door. He put out the lights, threw himself on the bed and began to think. His head ached so, he thought it would split, and yet he could think clearly. It was after midnight when he got up, turned on the lights and began to write. He wrote feverishly, covered about twenty pages of writing paper, and without changing a word, or looking at what he wrote, he enclosed it in an envelope and addressed it to his father.

All the bitterness of his aching soul he poured out in that letter; all the resentment at his spoiled and about to be ended life found expression in his closely and hurriedly written lines; he blamed his father as the cause of all his unhappiness.

"You repressed me almost from the day I was born; of all the games and recreations which are so necessary for a normal boy you deprived me; you did not



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permit me to taste life's smallest joy; you stunted my soul and depraved my mind into believing that life's greatest and noblest emotions were mean and ignoble and to be ashamed of. You tried to weaken my body and crush my soul, and you almost succeeded. If I got a broader outlook on life, a gentler view of mankind, it was after a severe struggle, and not because of you, but in spite of you. It was books that would have caused you to scold if you had found me reading them, that opened my eyes to the sham, the hollowness of your theologic dogmas, the cruelty of your beliefs and your conduct. Of course, you will say that you did it all for my good; that you crushed me and stifled me for my own happiness; but this is the excuse of all tyrants, the justification of all despots. A man who has but a few hours on this earth sees things with clear eyes and I believe now that you never had a spark of love for me, and that you repressed me, and stifled me, and tortured me to quench your hatred of me, to satisfy a cruel, revengeful streak in your soul. And now I return the hatred with

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interest. . . I regret that I have but such a short time left to hate you. . . The thought makes me mad. Not a ray of joy, not a spark of happiness in my childhood, or youth, or early manhood. Life seemed empty, worthless. Suddenly and unexpectedly Helen came into my life and I was to taste happiness; suddenly and unexpectedly the cup is dashed from my lips—and dashed by your hands. . . . Do you understand why I feel bitter and resentful? . . . But there is some satisfaction to feel that I shall never see you again, and that you shall never behold me while alive, and I hope not even when I am dead. This is the only thing in which human beings have the advantage over animals: when life becomes too much of a tragedy, a human being can cut it short. . . . Poor Mother, poor Helen, poor Malvina. . . .”

## XII.

His eyes burned and his lips were leather-dry when he finished his letter to his father. He drank slowly a glass of water, and sat down to pen another letter.

“Adored sweetheart,” he wrote, and

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closed his eyes. And as he closed his eyes he saw Marie's soft, bashful, appealing face, saw it so clearly as if she stood before him in person. And then it was Helen's face. And then the two faces seemed to fuse into one. "Lovadored sweetheart, permit me once more, for the last time in my life, to call you so. It is great happiness to be permitted to call you so, even to think of you so. It would be futile to write to you of my love. You know its depth and its intensity. You have given me the only real happiness that I have tasted in my not very happy life. You know the drab and dreary existence I have led until you came into my life. I thought that at last I was to taste paradise. But it was not to be. In this world some people are born for joy and usefulness, others are born to drag out a dreary, useless existence. Evidently, I was born for the latter; and if I had not had a glimpse of paradise, I would probably have continued to lead a useless unsatisfactory existence. But to have had you, and then to have to live without you, that I cannot do. I am not strong enough for

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that. I have a fair amount of will power, but that is beyond my strength. One cannot suddenly pass from paradise into hell and live.

Hush, dear. I know what you were going to say. You do not care what your father, what other doctors may say: you are going to marry me just as I am. I know you would. You said you preferred five years or one year with me than a lifetime with anybody else, or a lifetime *without* anybody else. But that would not be *right*. I know that you would gladly bring the sacrifice; but I am not willing to accept it. There is one thing that a hard ascetic life such as mine has been teaches one: and that is, *to do without*. I am unhappy, deeply unhappy. I never imagined that a human being could be so unhappy, that so much agony could be concentrated in one human soul. But my honor is still untarnished. And I trust it will remain untarnished until the end. But I would consider it badly besmirched, and I would have no peace the rest of my days, if I accepted your sacrifice. And perhaps you yourself would

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in time come to despise me for having permitted you to bring such a sacrifice. And contempt from you would be a million times worse than death. . . .

You are very young. You have your whole life before you. And it would not be right for me to taint it and perhaps to shorten it. Try to forget me. And try to live a life of fullness and usefulness. But before I seal this letter, my last letter to the one who was more precious to me than life, I must tell you once more that I love you as man never loved before. It sounds like a platitude and most likely it is; but it does not sound like a platitude to me. With the exception of one childish love, my love for Marie, I never loved a woman before, never touched a woman with hand or lips. All my love, all my yearnings were concentrated in you—and now I must leave you forever. I disappear from the scene. May you be happy, is the prayer of your lover. I will spend my last hours in thinking of you, in going over in memory the happy hours we have spent together. Bless you for the happiness you have

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brought into my life. Good-bye, forever, my dearest, most beloved, most adored sweetheart. Good-bye. Oh, how I wish, I could do something for you before I pass into eternity. . . . Beloved, good-bye. . . .”

When he finished the letter to Helen he remained staring into space for a long time. He finally shook himself with an effort, addressed and sealed the letter mechanically, then wrote a brief note to Dr. Daring telling him that he decided not to undergo any treatment, as the game was not worth the candle, because he had nobody and nothing to live for, and to live an empty life without Miss Morley was unbearably painful; he wrote another note to Freebird, then went out and mailed the letters.

## XIII.

Having completed that part of the program, he started out in search of a drug-store; after a while, he found a place that was “open all night,” entered it and asked for “a little morphine.” The druggist in charge of the place looked at him sus-

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piciously and asked him if he did not know that it was illegal to sell morphine except on a physician's prescription. "And whether with or without a prescription, we do not sell dope to fiends," said the druggist and pointed plainly to the door.

For an hour or more Frank tramped the streets, entering one drugstore after another, asking for some morphine, and everywhere he was curtly refused. Some thought he was a morphine habitué, others thought he was a detective on a hunt for violators of the law. He finally struck a small drugstore on the West Side, where the man in charge seemed to be willing to listen to his plea. "We are taking big chances in selling morphine," he said, "but I will let you have ten grains for ten dollars." Frank had heard that five grains was a sufficiently large dose to prove fatal, and as the amount of money he had was quite limited, he asked the druggist if he would not let him have five grains for five dollars. The druggist agreed. Having greedily accepted the powder, he walked rapidly to his hotel, and having

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re-entered his room, he quickly put the powder on his tongue, swallowed some water and threw himself on the bed. It was one o'clock in the morning, and he was tired unto death, physically and emotionally, and his eyes soon closed. At first his mind was disturbed and he felt oppressed by nightmares, but soon he seemed to sink into a deep heavy dreamless sleep. . . . His feeling of tiredness disappeared, and he felt that he was entering into a state of absolute rest.

## XIV.

What was that? Was somebody knocking at the door? Yes, so it seemed. And the knocking was becoming more insistent, more peremptory. Where was he? He knitted his brow, but he could not decide where he was and why he was there. The room was in semi-darkness. He switched on the light, and looked at his watch. It was seven o'clock. In the meantime the knocking continued, and a voice called out: "Open the door, sir." He turned the key, and a hotel clerk and



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bellboy entered. "We were getting worried, sir; we thought something might have happened to you. The maid wanted to clean the room, but you seemed to be asleep." "Yes, I guess I was asleep. I was very tired. I will be all right now. Thank you."

When he was alone he reviewed the situation. It all came back to him. Though his head was heavy, he could think clearly. So he was not dead? And he slept through the whole night and the whole day. He would have been ashamed to confess it, but he was glad he was not dead. There is always time to be dead. But how is it that that large dose of morphine didn't kill him? He mechanically took the paper which had contained the poison, turned it over, and noticed some writing on it. He made out the following: Veronal, ten grains. So the druggist played a trick on him. He charged him five dollars for something which could have been purchased for ten cents, and at the same time he did not run any risks selling a poison prohibited by law.

It may be stated here in parentheses

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that this is a common and favorite trick of some not over-scrupulous druggists. The requests for poisonous potions or powders for suicidal purposes are more frequent than the public has any idea of. The vast majority of druggists refuse to have anything to do with the unfortunates making such requests. They either tell them politely that they do not sell such things except on a physician's prescription or they order them brusquely to get out. Some druggists, however, think it a smart trick to make some money and at the same time to give the customer something mild, which will not jeopardize his life. So they take the would-be suicide's money and give some colored water or a harmless powder. Instead of laudanum for which the customer asks he gets some plain aqua, colored black or brown; instead of powdered opium—powdered extract of licorice; instead of morphine—quinine or veronal or some other mild hypnotic powder. The druggist salves his conscience with the argument that the man will be glad the next day to wake up and find that he is not dead. And there are instances where

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the druggist has been right. I have been told of cases of men or women coming in or writing in to a druggist—sometimes the next day, sometimes a month or a year later—thanking him for substituting a harmless substance for the poison which they had requested. The impulse to commit suicide is often temporary in character—the momentary agony has passed, and the victim has changed his or her mind. And it is well-known that a would-be suicide who has taken poison would often give everything in his possession to have his life saved.

And so Frank found that he was not dead; on the contrary, he perceived that he had his whole life before him—and he did not know what to do with it. To try to end it again by poison—he couldn't think of it. He remembered the rebuffs of the previous night, and he did not relish a repetition of the experience. And then in the end to be perhaps tricked again. . . No. But he could not go home, nor could he remain in New York where he was likely to meet some of his relatives or acquaintances from home. He would

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have to think it over. He took a cold bath from which he emerged with a clear head and a keen appetite. In fact he was ravenously hungry. He had hardly eaten anything during the previous day, he had slept *for eighteen hours* at a stretch, and now nature was making her prosaic demands. First of all, he must have something substantial to eat. He went out into the street, entered a restaurant, ordered a steak and he was surprised and dismayed at the intensity with which he relished his food. He felt rather ashamed. As long as he lived he had to eat in order to appease his hunger and to support life, but to enjoy the food—that seemed to him not quite right. He ordered a plentiful dessert and coffee, and when he got through, he was surprised to find that a great share of the agony, despair and despondency of the previous day was gone.

He began to feel somewhat ashamed of the letters which he wrote. Perhaps if he had waited until to-night he would not have written such letters. The previous night he was not only spiritually shocked, he was physically exhausted. Even to his

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father he might have written differently, in not quite so harsh a tone. . . .

Well, it was too late to undo things.

And he had a whole life before him. He felt peculiarly calm. He felt that all time, all eternity was his to do with as he pleased. So do some people feel when they are away on a vacation; they often work harder during their vacation than they do in their ordinary working days. The feeling that they are doing it of their own free will, that they do not have to do the work if they do not wish to, that it is all "pure gain," encourages them to do their best, and they do it without a feeling of fatigue.

Frank felt that his life was now really his own. Had the drug which he received been morphine, he would have been dead now; consequently, this life of his is a *found* life; it is like an article which had been lost and given up for lost but which has been recovered. He therefore is a truly free agent to do with his life as he pleases. To use it for evil or for good. His bringing up, his friendship with Ru-

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dolph and Marie, his love for Helen, his conversations with Freebird, his recent reading, the terrific shock he lived through, everything made him want "to do something for mankind," to exchange his life for some noble altruistic deed. And after that, he thought, he would be ready to die cheerfully.

On his way to the hotel from the restaurant, his ears were assailed by shrill cries of "Extra, extra," people were running to and fro, snatching the papers from the newsstands or newsboys, little groups of people were forming, talking and giving expression to tense emotions; great excitement seemed to prevail; evidently something extraordinary had happened. He bought a paper, and a glance at the heading decided him as to his course.

He saw his duty clearly. The "Huns" had committed another crime; this was the most dastardly of their deeds. Wantonly, without warning, they torpedoed an unarmed passenger steamer and eleven or twelve hundred innocent lives were lost; corpses of children, young girls and boys were now floating on the waves of

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the Atlantic. His mind was made up. And yet he could not understand what had happened to the German nation. He was very favorably inclined to the Germans; he loved their literature and their music, he had high respect for their science, and his love for Marie and Rudolph was unconsciously reflected towards all the inhabitants of Germany; and in the beginning of the war he, like millions of other Americans, was rather in favor of the Germans. But as day by day the papers were bringing descriptions of new atrocities, treacheries and barbarities—he had but one source of information, and he could not know that most of the atrocities, treacheries and barbarities were invented in the newspaper offices, or by the French and British authorities for propaganda purposes—he underwent an imperceptible change, he suffered a revolution of feeling and he began to loathe the “Huns.”

He still thought lovingly of Marie and Rudolph, but “the Germans must have a peculiar psychology, a psychology all their own, or they must have gone insane, or

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they could not commit such things"—that was his explanation, as it became the explanation of millions of other Americans, who formerly had high admiration for the Teuton race. Yes, something must have happened to the German nation. Their militarism, the desire for domination must have worked a complete corruption of their moral sense, must have destroyed in them all sense of honor, all feeling of humaneness. Such crimes must not be permitted to go unavenged. And though at heart he was a pacifist, and hated war, it was clear to him that he could make no better use of his useless and now empty life—dear sweet Helen was forever lost to him, *that* he knew—than by joining the army of the Allies and doing the little best he could to help crush arrogant and cruel militarism.

If he can not enjoy life, he will forfeit it in a good cause. One man can not accomplish much, but it is not what you do, but what you try to do that counts in the book of heaven. . . .



When Frank failed to appear for dinner, Mr. Brompton felt annoyed, and as was his habit when he felt annoyed, he grumbled; when the clock struck nine, ten, eleven, twelve and still no trace of Frank, Mr. Brompton as well as the mother and his sisters began to feel worried. This was the first time in his life that Frank stayed away from home without the parents being fully informed as to his whereabouts. They passed a restless, sleepless night, and the early dawn saw every member of the family up and about. As the day wore on, and still no news from Frank, the anxiety became unbearable; their nerves seemed to be stretched on a rack. Every step outside, every ring of the door bell, the least noise made them jump and look and listen—maybe it was he. . . .

It was the father to whom the suspense became a torture, and he said he would go out for a walk and perhaps step in to Dr. Morley's. Instead of going to Dr. Morley's, he went in the direction of the

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railroad station, which he passed without seemingly paying any attention to it; the train pulled in, the passengers came out, but Frank was not among them. Freebird was sitting on the bench near the station, as usual, dangling his feet and chewing a straw. The Rev. Brompton always disdained to notice or speak to Freebird. He disapproved of such non-conventional characters in general, but he still more strongly disapproved of his dangerously liberal opinions, snatches of which reached him now and then through various channels. He considered it *infra dignitatem* to speak to a man who persisted in going about barefoot and bareheaded. But this time he swallowed his pride, and condescended to approach Freebird. He had heard that lately Frank was seen frequently in friendly and apparently confidential conversation with Freebird and he thought that perhaps the latter might have some knowledge of the former's whereabouts. He inquired of Freebird, but Freebird professed complete ignorance. He went to Dr. Morley's. Dr. Morley was polite and friendly, but the

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Rev. Brompton could not help feeling that there was not the former warmth. He even imagined as if his host would be glad to be rid of his presence.

He asked if he could see Helen. No, Helen had not been feeling well, had locked herself in her room and refused to see anybody. She would not even see her father. He soon left, but he could not bear to go home.

He felt acutely, poignantly unhappy, more unhappy than he thought he or any human being could feel; it was the first time that he felt this variety of acute pain; once in his life he had a shock, but it was of a different character, and it soon ceased making itself felt. But now he felt that if his son Frank did not turn up he would never in his life have another peaceful moment.

While Mr. Brompton was pacing the secluded streets of Midvalia, the postman delivered a rather bulky letter at his house. They saw it was from Frank. The mother snatched it with joyful and anxious impatience, and though it was addressed to the father and though under ordinary cir-

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cumstances she never ventured to open a letter addressed to her husband, she nervously tore open the envelope and began to read. And as she read her eyes became big and staring, her throat became leathery dry and every drop of blood seemed to leave her thin pale face; it became still paler and thinner. And at the same time an overpowering anger filled her soul, and she felt as strong as never before. The little, despised, bullied woman became a tigress—she felt she could now battle with her husband and not be afraid. She was torn by totally conflicting feelings. On the one hand she felt the deepest anguish at the possible loss of her beloved son; on the other hand she was filled with a feeling of subconscious relief at the fact that at last she has freed herself from the incubus of her husband, that at last she would not have to tremble before that overbearing and tyrannous bully. The letter made many things clear to her and put her husband in the right place. Never again will she be afraid of him. But Frank, Frank, who will restore her dear Frank?

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The doorknob turned and the Rev. Brompton entered the room. He perceived instantly that something had happened. "What is it?" he asked in his usual curt, domineering manner.

"Read and you will see," answered his wife and she pointed to Frank's open letter. He looked at the envelope which was addressed to him, wanted to ask why his letter was opened, noticed the expression on his wife's face—and said nothing.

He took the letter, went into his study, sat down heavily in his easy chair and read Frank's letter. He read it once, twice, three times; some parts he read half a dozen times; and though the letter made him smart, he felt, strange to say, no anger; he felt a deep compassion for his boy; and his anxiety for him grew with every moment; and soon he knew that his soul was filled with a deep love; he became aware that he loved Frank—parents often become aware of their love for their children only after they lose them or are about to lose them. He locked the door, threw himself on the couch and broke out into sobs; that strong, proud, haughty tyrant

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sobbed for the first time in his life. He felt ashamed of his weakness, and he was afraid that the people in the house might hear him, but he could not entirely suppress his sobs. After having succeeded in calming down somewhat, he began to pace the room to and fro, and tried to think.

It was long after midnight, when exhausted with fruitless efforts at deciding on a plan of action, he laid down on the couch in his study and attempted to sleep. But sleep would not come. He was lying in the dark with his eyes open and his life passed before him like a slowly moving landscape.

## XVI

He was brought up in a strict puritanical atmosphere; he had to work hard, and if ever he failed to stand at the head of his class, his father showed his displeasure; he had a most terrific struggle with the "desires of the flesh," but he overcame them, that is, he succeeded in repressing them; for to yield to them, would have been, in the atmosphere in which he lived, a crime equivalent to burglary, arson or

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homicide. But what terrible efforts the struggle cost him! He remembered now how many sleepless nights he passed, how restlessly he had to pace the floor, how often he had to get up nights, go out and walk for hours in order to calm his turbulent spirit; and not infrequently he had to have recourse to an icy tub. But he came out victorious. He was graduated from the seminary and from the university with the highest prizes—and, what others did not know, he came out a chaste and strong man. His father was highly pleased with him. His mother was not there to enjoy his graduation; she died when he was in his infancy, so that he did not have the privilege of a tender mother's care and love. He stood so high in his classes and his examinations were of such a degree of excellence that not only did he carry off most of the prizes, but he won the most coveted scholarship which entitled him to a year's sojourn in Europe and study in the universities of France and Germany. He remembered the sigh of relief he gave when he left the paternal roof. Of course he loved and respected

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his father—wasn't he his father?—and yet he felt as if he was leaving a prison. Why do people forget such things? He knew that his parental home was a prison, and yet he made his own home a severer, a grimmer prison for Frank. Of course he did it all for Frank's good, to protect him from temptation, to keep him pure and safe—and yet, it wasn't quite right. He could not help feeling that it was not quite right.

Yes, he could remember the delightful sensation of freedom which he experienced on leaving for Europe. One year at least he will have without supervision, without having to give account of every step he took, every visit he made. The ocean trip was full of charm and the months he spent in Germany were months of hard and interesting work. He knew he had gathered enough material for sermons to last him for several years; and he had also collected valuable data for a thesis which he contemplated writing.

The scholarship year was coming to a close, and the remaining few weeks of his vacation he decided to devote to rest, rec-



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reation and travel. His pleasantest memories were of Switzerland and of the Rhine. As he was examining his life, he suddenly perceived that the happiest, most peaceful days of his existence, the days in which he felt in tune with the universe, felt kindly and sympathetic toward whomsoever he met, were the days he tramped in the Alps or walked with his knapsack among the vine-clad hills of the Rhineland. The world did not seem to him a vale of tears, humanity did not appear as a fighting, struggling conglomeration in which you must crush or be crushed. As he thought of himself at that period, he seemed to see a gentle and sympathetic young man, and he asked himself the question: Why could he not have remained like that forever? What made him harsh, bitter, domineering? Well, no use dwelling on that. Such is life. It was in that soft and sympathetic mood that he arrived in Paris.

He spent several days in visiting the Louvre, the churches and the various museums and monuments. The evenings were apt to drag along slowly, as he did

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not care to go to theaters, vaudeville shows or cabarets. He was opposed to such amusements on moral grounds, and besides they hurt physically, i. e., sexually.

One evening as he was sitting in the lobby of his hotel, desultorily looking through the daily papers, he was tapped on the shoulder by a young chap, in whom he recognized a former schoolmate, one Andrew Thornton. He never cared particularly for Thornton, as he considered him a fellow of loose morals and rather obscene speech; but in a foreign country, when you are lonesome, you joyfully meet an acquaintance whom in your home town you would meet very coolly or would turn away from altogether. The young Rev. Brompton was genuinely glad to meet Andrew Thornton. They talked about old times, discussed mutual acquaintances, and Thornton asked Brompton if he had anything particular to do this evening. Brompton answered in the negative.

"Then come, let me show you a bit of Paris by night." Brompton hesitated, but Thornton was insistent. "It won't hurt you. Nothing could hurt your pure

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and icy morals. But as a future saviour of souls, you ought to be familiar with all phases of life."

And Brompton, curious to see a part of life of which he now and then vaguely heard, but of which he could never form a clear idea, yielded. And Thornton gloated inwardly.

A certain class of men, of depraved and sexually loose morals, experience a diabolical joy when they succeed in seducing a hitherto chaste man. Their joy is doubled when the man whom they are successful in making yield to temptation is one of particularly strong and severe morals, one who prides himself on his puritanical bringing up, his strict religious code, and his never-yielding will-power. The joy is tripled when the victim belongs to the clerical profession. They, the Thorntons, like to boast of how the Rev. So-and-So was made to behave and to act so-and-so.

The Thorntons, whose business consisted in inducing respectable and well-to-do Americans, of all ages, to see Paris by night, constituted, at one time, a very

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considerable class numerically. While a few followed the occupation of depraving young men out of sheer joy in the thing—this form of perversion is well known to sexologists—the majority were in it for a living. And a very good living they made out of it. Stranded in Paris, lazy or unable to follow an honest occupation, forced to live by their wits, they found a profitable field in catering to the people's instinct of debauchery. The strangers who were shown the town, of course, paid all the expenses, and the Thorntons got a good commission from the proprietors of the disreputable and gay places to which they brought the rich Americans, and they even demanded and got a good share from the demi-mondaines to whom they brought clients.

Thornton ordered a cab and they first drove over to the Moulin Rouge. The Moulin Rouge still exists in Paris, but it is a pitiable parody of the old real Moulin Rouge. The Red Mill of those days was enough to bring a red blush to the brazenest of cheeks; the Moulin Rouge of the present day is a dull, semi-respectable

drinking place and nothing else. In his wildest dreams, when his censor was completely and soundly asleep, the young Rev. Brompton did not imagine the things that he saw with his physical eyes at the Moulin Rouge, and he would not have believed that such things could be done in public in a Christian city without interference by the authorities. The brazenly undressed women, the open, persistent solicitation, the lewd, unconcealedly suggestive dancing by the public, finally the quadrilles danced by hired prostitutes in their underwear, and then to cap the climax, the appearance of a totally nude female on the stage, in a *danse du ventre*, set his blood boiling and beclouded his brain. The purchase of wine was obligatory in that place, and a bottle of cheap champagne completely undermined young Rev. Brompton's will-power. When they left the Moulin Rouge, Thornton ordered a cab, whispered something to the driver and they drove off. They soon stopped before a house with closed shutters; loud music and dancing could be heard. It was a well-known *maison de tolerance*. Before

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he could offer a word of protest—perhaps he would have offered no protest—he found himself inside the house, Thornton leading the way.

Extremely lewd dancing was going on, semi-nude girls in abbreviated dresses were sitting on men's laps, and every now and then a man and girl disappeared in the direction of one of the numerous bedrooms. Thornton motioned one of the young ladies and asked her to take good care of his particular friend, Mr. Brompton. And the young lady did. And when he left the place in the morning he felt himself a different man. He could not say whether a better or a worse man, but a different man. It would have been beyond him to describe his sensations. And for ten nights in succession, he spent every night in that place.

His conscience tortured him now and then, but he consoled himself with the thought that in the eyes of God it was the same thing to commit a sin once or to repeat the same sin a dozen times; and if God will forgive him his one sin he will forgive all his sins. This was of course

sophistry. But the truth of the matter is that Mr. Brompton's passion was now stronger than all his principles. Once the inhibition was broken, his pent up and imprisoned emotions burst through with irresistible power; and if he had been certain that his sexual indulgences meant eternal damnation, he would have been unable to restrain himself.

Also he knew that this was his only opportunity to indulge in illicit relations; he knew that as soon as he returned home, he would have to resume and follow the strictly chaste life that he had been leading before, that he would have to hold his now fully awakened sex instinct in leash until he got married, and that might take several months or several years. It takes two to get married and a partner for life cannot be found as readily as a partner for a night in a *maison de tolerance*. Whether one can forgive him or not—we are merely stating the fact, that all the circumstances combined to make Mr. Brompton indulge frequently, immoderately and carelessly. For unfortunately he knew nothing whatever of such a

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thing as venereal disease, and consequently knew nothing about precautions and preventives.

Some two weeks after his last sexual experience—debauch would be more correct, for during the last two or three nights he indulged in incredible excesses—Brompton noticed some peculiar symptoms and a peculiar little ulcer, which, this not being a medical treatise, need not be described here in greater detail. He was in London at the time on his way to the United States. At first he paid no attention to the matter. "Just some pimples, they no doubt will soon pass away." But the pimples did not pass away, they became much more numerous and more annoying; his body was covered with a rash as if he had the measles; besides this, he began to have painful, disagreeable sores like white patches in his throat, mouth and on the lips; he also began to feel feverish and suffer with severe headaches. His tongue was coated, he had no appetite, and he felt terribly depressed.

Though he knew nothing about medicine or hygiene—at that period any



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knowledge of or about the human body was considered superfluous and irrelevant—he felt miserable enough to know that he was sick, and quite sick. He consulted a physician who looked at him in a peculiar manner and told him that he did not care to touch his case, but he advised him to go to Dr. H., at that time a famous London specialist. Dr. H. examined him, told him that he was sorry to inform him that he had syphilis, and while it was a great misfortune, it was not to be considered an irretrievable catastrophe; if the treatment was pursued faithfully, many cases were completely cured, so that they could marry and have healthy, untainted children. He then prescribed for him a salve which was to be well rubbed in every night for a month, on different parts of the body. He also ordered him some pills which he was to take regularly, with occasional intermissions, for two years; for a year he was to go without any medicine, and if during that year no symptoms of the disease, that is, no eruption on the skin, etc., became manifest, he could consider himself cured

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and might marry without any fear. If, as an additional safeguard, he wanted to wait another year, so much the better. That was at that time the approved method of treatment; there were no tests by which we could determine the presence or absence of the disease in the blood stream and in the spinal fluid, and if a man, after having taken the prescribed course of treatment, remained free from open manifestations of the disease, he was considered cured. Even he, the Rev. Brompton, though a clergyman and not a physician, now knew better.

During the past few days he had been reading up a good deal about syphilis and its far-reaching effects, and lying on his couch and reviewing the past, he was horrified at the havoc he had worked; his ailing wife, with her abortions and still-born children, Frank's ruined life—and who knows what may yet happen to Malvina and Luella? They all stood before him and looked at him reproachfully, and it seemed to him, hatefully. But at that time, Dr. H.'s easy going manner and hopeful prognosis lifted a heavy burden

from his shoulders, and he looked into the future with little fear and apprehension. The effect of the treatment prescribed by Dr. H. was quickly apparent. The headaches disappeared, the skin cleared up and after three or four months he forgot that there was anything the matter with him. At the end of the year he began to doubt that he ever had the disease, and while, "to be on the safe side," he still continued with the treatment, he did so rather irregularly, often failing to take the medicine when he should have done so. But he seemed to be feeling well, and it is hard for the average person to consider himself sick when he has no symptoms reminding him of it.

Two or three years after his initial infection, his disease became a vague, and only slightly disturbing memory to him. Another year passed and another—five years in all since his accident in Paris—and he married Anna Lancaster.

He was not in love with her, but she was very well off in her own name, and she was healthy, gentle and timid. He knew that he would have no trouble in

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managing her. He did not want a strong-minded wife who would insist upon having her own way or whom he would have to break in. His domineering disposition was growing upon him. He made no mistake in marrying Anna; her timidity had gradually increased until she seemed to have no will of her own. Her numerous abortions not only weakened her physically, but her failure to bear a son to her Lord and Master broke her spirit and made her feel guilty and apologetic.

Poor woman. She blamed herself for everything, as most women have been doing for centuries. It never entered her mind that her strong, ideal husband could in any way be responsible for her abortions, for her stillborn or rapidly dying children. Poor woman. For the first time in the many years of their married life did the expression "poor woman" come to his mind and his tongue in connection with his wife. Poor woman. He ought to apologize to her, to beg her forgiveness. But will she forgive him? She might, if he would find Frank and bring him home. Without Frank, he knew that

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his life at home would not be worth much. He knew, and he saw signs of it on her face, that the gentlest and most submissive woman could become a giantess in strength and a tigress in ferocity when the life and welfare of her child was threatened.

### XVII.

At this point in his life-review he hastily got up, for the sun was silvering the eastern horizon, and he was anxious to get the first train to the city. Not an unnecessary hour must be lost. Even if he were inclined to tarry in the house, he knew that his wife would not permit him to do so. As he passed through the dining-room, he found her up. Evidently she had not closed her eyes during the night, either. She handed him a cup of coffee, of which he took a few sips; he then walked rapidly toward the station, and he was in time to catch the first train. On arriving in the city, he made his first visit to Dr. Daring. He hoped not only to find out something about Frank's

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whereabouts and his physical condition, but he wanted some enlightenment on his own condition, and on the condition of his wife and two daughters. Dr. Daring explained the situation; told him what might happen, what was likely and what was unlikely to occur, and advised, for safety's sake, an examination of every member of the family. But he could throw no light on Frank's possible whereabouts. He could not even say whether Frank was still alive or not. The note that he received from him contained no definite clue and could give rise only to guess-work.

From the doctor the Rev. Brompton went to a parishioner of his, a well-known lawyer, whom he told briefly of his trouble; the lawyer called up a firm of private detectives, and asked them to put their best man on the case and to spare no expense; but day after day passed and not a trace of Frank. He disappeared as if the earth had opened and swallowed him. Every two or three days the Rev. Brompton would visit the detective agency to receive any reports they might have and to

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urge them to redoubled efforts. But each time he came back disappointed.

And as hope began to vanish, he felt more unhappy and more humble; the stoop of his shoulders became more pronounced, his walk became more heavy and shuffling and he felt it a hardship to meet and greet people or to enter into conversation with anybody. And it is returning from one of his fruitless visits to the detective agency that we meet him at the opening of our story.

And many more times did the Rev. Brompton go to the city; several times he went to other towns to follow up some clue, but each time he came home empty-handed. And he became so humble and so dejected that his wife began to take pity on him and urged him to calm down and not to kill himself with worry. It is remarkable how wives who feared and hated their husbands because they were bullied and maltreated by them become gentle and solicitous when these same husbands get into trouble, or become physically or mentally dependent. Women like to have men dependent upon them; they

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need objects on which to pour out their mother instinct. There are some modern women who deny that they have any such maternal instinct; but they are the exceptions. In the vast majority of women the maternal instinct is as strong, or almost as strong, as it used to be in the days of yore.

And by the way, I knew a woman who hated her bully husband so that she prayed daily for his death. When he became paralyzed, she became the personification of tender solicitude. She gave up everything, friends, amusements, lectures, etc., only to be constantly near him. But this is another story. Quite another story.

## XVIII.

Very few people would have recognized in Lieutenant Frank Smith, Frank Brompton of six months ago. He had difficulty in recognizing himself. When he thought of the night on which he tramped the streets trying to obtain a dose of morphine, it seemed to him a horrid nightmare. The six months of hard



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training in the open air had metamorphosed him bodily and spiritually. Never before had he enjoyed the sensation of hard well-developed muscles, of deep breathing, of marching for miles without fatigue. A man with a healthy, well-disciplined body does have more self-respect, and that contributes considerably towards the feeling of self-satisfaction, which is a part of the state we are all, whether we know it or not, striving after, that is, happiness.

Spiritually, his transformation was even more marked. His gloom and introspection were gone. He stopped asking himself questions as to the purpose of life in general and his life in particular; he ceased trying to discover the why and wherefore of all things. He was settled. His mind was made up. He needed no further argument pro or con. He was sure that he had the truth, that he was right, and it was his business to go ahead. He knew that he had to make the world safe for democracy, that he had to crush German or, as he preferred to say, without giving himself an account of the

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reason (a good Freudian would have no difficulty in discovering the reason), Prussian militarism, and that every man worthy of the name had to sacrifice himself, if necessary, to prevent the repetition of such atrocities as the Germans were guilty of, and to make this war the *last* war. In short, he felt that he was in the right, he was helping to save civilization, and a sense of peace, of duty faithfully performed, descended into his soul. He entered into his work with ardor, and his earnestness, intelligence and indefatigability earned him rapid promotion. As a private he was taught that the enemy soldiers were not human beings like others, that they were savage Huns, cruel demons, that they subjected their prisoners to indescribably devilish tortures, and that therefore, they should fight to the last ditch and rather permit themselves to be killed than to be taken prisoners. And as stories, apparently authentic and from various sources, were told which "proved" the tortures, he fully believed in them.

And what he was taught, he was teaching with deep earnestness the recruits of

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his company. True, the German prisoners of war that he saw looked very meek, very humble and gentle; but when the mind is directed towards a certain line, it sees only what it is unconsciously bidden to see. All contrary factors are passed over, unseen and unheard, as if they did not exist.

For the present he deeply and unquestioningly believed all the atrocity stories, which were with malicious, though in the opinion of the authorities justifiable, deliberateness invented for military and civilian consumption, and he acted accordingly. He became convinced that it was his sacred duty, his duty to his God, to his country and to his conscience to kill off as many Germans as possible. The more Germans you killed, the greater and nobler a patriot you were. The sole aim of the soldier was to see how many killed Germans he had to his credit, and the rivalry became shamefully, horribly intense. And incredible as it may sound, many German soldiers who threw down their arms and held up their hands in sign of surrender, were murdered in cold

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blood. One of the excuses was that a German soldier could not be trusted; that even without a weapon he might play some treacherous trick; but the truth is that the word had gone forward that prisoners of war were expensive and troublesome, and the *fewer prisoners were taken, the better*. As of the American Indian, the soldiers of the Allies were taught that the only good German was a dead German. And, again, incredible as it may seem, Frank swallowed it and believed it all, and—yes, it is true—gentle, kindly, pacific Frank Brompton became as blood-thirsty as the worst of them. It was necessary to be so in order to save the world. . . .

## XIX.

It was a night of tension in the trenches. It was whispered about that early in the morning there would be a desperate “over-the-top” hand to hand combat. The officers were told that it was a most important strategic point, and that a good deal depended upon victory or defeat in this

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battle. Most of the soldiers were nervous; some cursed—inwardly of course—the “cursed” war, cursed themselves and the day they were born; many would have run away if they had had any safe place to run to, and if they hadn’t known that capture meant also sure death, for desertion; a few looked forward to the coming slaughter as to a grim and disagreeable but exalted duty; it was necessary to sacrifice a million human lives in order that such horrors might never again be repeated; and a few there were who, sadistically cruel by nature, filled with the brutal instincts of some of our barbarian ancestors, looked forward to the coming morning with keen joy; for nothing gave these people such intense pleasure as they experienced at the sight of blood, when sticking a bayonet in the chest or abdomen of a human being or when watching the dying groans and writhing of the body of a man, whom they had “finished.”

Calmly analyzed and stripped of hypocritical pretense, the emotions of the soldier were: deathly fear, sullen resentment, misguided and artificially manufactured

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enthusiasm and naked, cruel bloodlust.

The morning was dark and dreary; a fine drizzle was coming down, and it was penetratingly chilly. The tension was becoming more tense; some of the soldiers thought that they could not stand it much longer, that something in them was going to snap; some wished they were dead, anything, only that the damned thing were over. At last the signal was given, and the imprisoned slaves—for they were slaves and prisoners in the true sense of the word—began to crawl out from their underground cells, the trenches. Some were deathly pale, like walking corpses, some were distinctly and audibly shivering, some were just sullen, some walked with an air of braggadoccio, and some rushed like hungry beasts who were about to taste blood.

The hand-to-hand battle was bloody and furious; the dying and the dead were lying scattered all around. Frank did not know how long the carnage lasted; for him it seemed that it lasted an eternity and that it would never end; his eyes were bloodshot, his tongue seemed to stick to

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the roof of his mouth, his throat was as dry as parchment, he was excruciatingly thirsty, his head throbbed as if about to burst; he knew he was wounded somewhere, but he did not pay any attention to it. He kept on hacking about himself with all the fury of righteous indignation, which is the fiercest fury of all. Suddenly he found himself face to face with a German soldier; he looked so young, almost a boy; and though his face was grimy, one could see that it was a kind and gentle face; and his hair was blonde and his eyes were of a deep, deep blue. And he had no weapon and he held up his hands in sign of surrender. But they were told—the order emanated from the French High Command—not to take any prisoners, and Frank was filled with the fury of battle, and before he gave himself account of what he was doing, he stuck his bayonet into the chest of the defenseless soldier. The German boy sank to his knees, and with eyes that were getting blurred with the glaze of death, he looked reproachfully in Frank's face.

Never, never, were he to live a thousand

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years, will Frank forget the reproachful eyes of the dying German soldier-boy. And what was it? Was he having auditory hallucinations? Was the strain of the sleepless night and of the bloody battle unsettling his brain? But he could have sworn, that as he was leaning over the dying soldier, he heard the latter's dying voice distinctly pronounce his name. And again he repeated the word: Frank. And with a terrible effort the rapidly sinking young man pointed to his inside pocket and, scarcely audible, he pronounced the words: "Letter . . . mother." And then a terrible twitch—and he was dead. Only his eyes kept on staring directly into the eyes of his slayer. And Frank could not take his eyes away from the now peaceful face of his victim. Evidently he wanted to have a letter mailed to his mother, and this dying wish Frank was going to fulfill, if there was any way of doing it.

Frank unbuttoned the dead soldier-boy's coat, and from the inside pocket he removed a neatly wrapped package of letters; across the outside wrapper there was



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written in a clear hand, in German, French, English and Italian. "The dead have no enemies; in case of my death, please mail these letters to the people to whom they are addressed, and save the survivors the unnecessary anguish of uncertainty. Whether you be German, French, English, American or Italian, please fulfill a dead man's last wish. I forgive you. I forgive everybody." Frank swore to himself that he would fulfill that wish. That was the least he could do for the brutal wanton murder he committed. (Oh, those eyes!) And strange to say, whether it was the reaction from the tension, the fatigue of the night and the day or those reproachful eyes, but Frank did not feel at all elated. And the fact that the battle was won by the Allies, did not give him such satisfaction as he knew he should have experienced. The officers were gay, the surviving soldiers were eating voraciously and drinking large glasses of wine, but he could neither eat nor drink (oh, those eyes!). And the package of letters seemed to be burning a hole in his chest

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(oh, that silent, gentle, reproachful look!).

He went to his cubby hole, laid down on his cot, lit a candle and removed the outside wrapper. The first letter was addressed to Frau Elisabeth Auerbach, near Munich. The second letter—what, was he getting insane? Was he losing his mind? Was he having visual hallucinations now, as he had auditory hallucinations in the morning on the battlefield? He looked again and again. No, there was no mistake. The letter was addressed to Miss Malvina Brompton, Midvalia, New York, U. S. A. The letter was not sealed—soldiers know that all their letters must go through the hands and eyes of a censor before they can be mailed. And as he was handling it, a photograph fell from the envelope—yes, it was the picture of his sister Malvina; and the picture was inscribed to “My Eternal Lover, Rudolph.”

He broke out into a hoarse laugh, but the laugh was suddenly interrupted; he felt a deathly nausea taking possession of him, and he was bathed in a cold clammy perspiration; he felt as sick as if he had

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been given a terrific blow in the abdomen, and, mercifully, he fell in a dead faint. People were coming and going, but he was dead to his surroundings, and they in the semi-darkness paid no attention to him; they thought he was asleep, as were so many others, after the strenuous day of battle. Gradually he began to come to himself; he had no idea how long he was unconscious. At first he hopefully thought that the whole thing was a wicked nightmare. Oh, how he longed that this were so! He would joyfully have exchanged the remainder of his life for the certainty that this was but a dream, that he did not wantonly murder Rudolph Auerbach. But no; it was not a dream. It was the brutal reality: the package of letters was right there on his cot. And so he was the murderer, the common brutal murderer of Rudolph Auerbach, the gentlest and sweetest soul that he had ever known, the brother of his first love and the beloved betrothed of his beloved sister. Why, oh, why did he not succeed in making an end to his worse than useless life on the night when he found out that

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he was a victim of hereditary disease! Maybe Rudolph would not be lying now rigid in death, and his mother would not be ending her days in lonely misery, deprived of the sole comfort she had in life.

For a moment the thought came to him: "After all, this is war; it is not as if I had murdered him in peace time." But to his honor be it said, only for a moment. He rejected it, as dishonest and hypocritical. The killing of Rudolph was murder, pure and simple, and there was no way out of it. And he was a common, brutal murderer. Yes, he has lived too long. It would have been better for himself and better for a number of people if he had died when he had made up his mind to die. Better yet if he had never been born. But this time he will not fail.

And suddenly he lost all pride and satisfaction in the knowledge of having killed a number of "Huns." And just as suddenly he became imbued with the absolute certainty that the stories of the German atrocities were all deliberately manufactured lies. He knew that Rudolph could not be an exception; the na-

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tion that produced him must have produced thousands or perhaps millions of others like him. He saw clearly that war was hell, that the Germans were probably neither better nor worse than the soldiers of any other nation. Every nation contains some brutes, and during war the brutish instincts are sure to come to the surface.

We often judge a nation by one or two of its members. Let John Smith have some business with a foreigner who proves to be mean, dishonest and a cheat and John Smith will be very apt to believe and to proclaim that the whole nation to whom the foreigner belongs is a nation of mean, dishonest cheats. And the best of us cannot wholly resist such reflex judgments. I knew a man who prided himself on his internationalism, who was badly cheated by three Frenchmen and meanly treated by a French woman; and try as he may, he cannot help considering the whole French nation a nation of dishonorable cheats. And I know a Socialist who, because of an unpleasant experience with an Armenian, is firmly convinced that

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every Armenian without exception is a cheat and a thief. And *vice versa*. Our love and respect for half a dozen people belonging to a certain nation is apt to be transferred to that nation as a whole.

## XX.

"But this time I am going to make sure. I have nothing to live for. Life now would be one continuous torment, a torment too terrible for me to bear. So to-night there must be an end. Only first I have a few small duties to perform." These were Frank's thoughts. Then he sat down to write some letters.

His first letter was to his sister Malvina. It ran as follows (I have it before me):

Dearest, beloved little sister: I do not, I shall not ask you to forgive me; you can't; nobody could; I could never forgive myself; hence my decision to end my miserable existence, which brought no joy to me, and only suffering to others. My life has been a tragedy from the day of my birth. I have been a burden to myself throughout. At last I thought that I was

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fulfilling a noble duty, accomplishing something. Instead, I became a common murderer. Yes, a common murderer: let others mince words if they choose; with the clearness that precedes the passing into the other world, I see that I have been a common murderer. And I killed the gentlest and sweetest creature—yes, I must not beat about the bush—I killed your lover. It was I who bayoneted him with my own hands, when he asked to be spared, and when he was without any weapons. Curse me, curse my memory, I deserve it. But nobody can curse me as much as I curse myself.

Of course it would have been as much of a crime if I had killed a stranger who offered no resistance and asked to be taken prisoner; but because the victim was Rudolph, your Rudolph, the pain is so much greater and the crime stands out so much clearer. And I cannot get rid of his reproachful dying eyes—hence I must die. And if, at least, I had the consolation that the war that we are engaged in was a righteous war—it would be easier to bear. But this conviction of the utter

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righteousness of our side and the utter unrighteousness of the enemy which was with me until this morning has suddenly left me, and I feel lost and floundering.

Thank God, it is not for long, I have not much longer to suffer. And yet, if you knew how cruelly I am suffering, you might have pity on me and forgive me. I would die more peacefully if I could think that you did. Give my love and my last farewell to Mother, sister Luella and Helen. And do try to forgive your unhappy brother who was predestined to a life of failure before he was born. I enclose Rudolph's letter with your photograph. I am fulfilling his dying wish. I did not know whom I murdered until at his request I removed the package of letters from his pocket, but he evidently recognized his murderer, for in his dying whisper I could plainly distinguish the word "Frank." Good-bye, sister, farewell. I have no consolation to offer you, but beg you to try not to think of me with hatred. Your unhappy Frank who should never have been born.

His second letter was to his father:



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Good-bye. I forgive you the injury you have done me, for I can see that it was done unwittingly. Your intentions were good, and you were ignorant. This world is a sorry muddle, and it is hard to know what is right and what is wrong. If only the rulers didn't try deliberately to mislead, to poison the minds and to influence the passions of the peoples! I myself was blinded. I thought I was engaged in a glorious work of liberation. It seems to me now that I was engaged in common murder. I may be mistaken. But this is the way I feel now. Good-bye. Be good to Mother.—Frank.

And then he wrote a letter to Rudolph's mother and addressed a request to his superior officer, with whom he was on a very friendly footing, to see to it that the letters are sent to their proper destinations and then—the loud report of a pistol shot, and Frank was a limp mass on the floor.

When some officers and a hastily summoned surgeon entered the room they found Frank in a pool of blood, unconscious, and practically pulseless. Remov-

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al of the clothing disclosed a small hole near the region of the heart, from which the blood was trickling in a slender but steady stream. He evidently aimed directly at the heart. He was quickly transported to the field hospital, and measures were taken to counteract the shock. It was considered too hazardous to attempt to remove the bullet, which had evidently penetrated the lung. He was pretty nearly exsanguinated before the hemorrhage stopped, and it was necessary to practice transfusion a number of times before his pulse became of a more or less reassuring quality.

For two months Frank's life hung in the balance—he remembered vaguely that he was given the Croix de Guerre—and when an immediate fatal issue was no longer feared, he was so weak, so utterly feeble and anemic, that grave doubts were entertained as to his ever being restored to normal health. He could walk but with considerable difficulty, and only with the use of a cane. No trouble was made about his attempt at suicide; his superiors were friendly to him and it was silently

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agreed to consider it an accident. He was sent to Paris to recuperate in one of the well-equipped suburban hospitals.

For the first two months or so in the hospital he led a purely vegetative existence; he was satisfied to pass the entire day on a chair, in the garden or on the balcony, and do nothing. His mind was quiescent, dormant, and he did not permit it to wake up. *He wanted* not to think. If he had been able permanently to deaden his brain he would have done so.

## XXI.

Gradually his energy returned and he became interested in what was going on about him. He asked for the papers, which he eagerly read, but like every soldier actually engaged on the battlefield, he learned to distrust and to despise them. He knew that not only in matters of opinion were they untrustworthy, but in matter of fact they were dishonest, distorting, exaggerating and even manufacturing the news out of whole cloth, as suited their ulterior purposes. He wanted some more solid mental pabulum.

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He read hundreds of books furnished by the camp libraries, but they did not satisfy his mental eagerness, either. He felt that those books were "picked." He wanted to read without any supervision or censorship. As he read French fluently, he began to obtain books from various Paris libraries, and as no censorship was exercised over French books, he could read to his heart's content. He also ordered from Galignani's a number of English books.

Books do exert an incalculable influence on men's ideas and their manner of thinking; but not on ideas only; the influence is also great on their actions and conduct. Some men have been known to change their entire manner of living and even to give up their professions after reading certain books. But only such men are influenced by the reading of books and periodical literature as are already in a receptive mood for the ideas propounded, or such who at least possess open minds, willing to examine new truths. For the reception of humanitarian ideals another condition is necessary: the man must be

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altruistically inclined; he must be kind-hearted. The word kind or kind-hearted sounds childish, but it is a very real quality and almost indispensable in any one who is desirous of working for the advancement of humanity. There are men who possess closed minds and closed souls; such men will not be in the least influenced by any amount of reading. They may read things which they cannot help admitting are true, but they do not penetrate their minds. Those truths play around their cerebral hemispheres, but they cannot penetrate into them; so hermetically are they sealed. They may read of injustice, unfairness, brutality, cruelty, heart-breaking and hair-raising horrors; they know that it is all true, but they are not touched by it. They are so constituted that other people's suffering means nothing to them. Others there are who seem actually to enjoy suffering and misery and cruelty. And we will fail to understand many things that are happening in this world, until we frankly admit the existence of such a class of people—people who are altogether untouched by humani-

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ty's sufferings and by all the injustices with which we are surrounded, or to whom suffering and cruelty and murder are actual sources of pleasure and delight.

It is well to consider the influence on human beings of a battle, particularly of a hand-to-hand combat. Does it affect everybody alike? Some people become saints after having participated in one battle. They become so horrified at what they have witnessed, that nothing in the world can induce them to participate in another. Some become hysterical, some, by the same defence-mechanism, become shell-shocked, others simply refuse to go into another battle and take the consequences whatever they may be. When the war is over (and the more courageous do it even before the war is over), some people of this class dedicate their lives to fighting war and to exposing its horrors, its brutalities and its futility. The vast mass of the people is not much influenced one way or another; and when another war is ordered, they go into it; sullenly perhaps, but they do go nevertheless. They may hate personally to have to un-

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dergo again the same hardships and horrors, but they are not sufficiently enlightened to view war in general as a thing of horror and utter beastliness. But there is still a third class. To it belong people who, as mentioned previously, derive joy and pleasure from sticking a bayonet into a quivering body; the sound of screams and of dying groans and the sight of glazing eyes, of gushing blood, of dismembered and disemboweled human beings afford them a ghoulisn stimulation; they are sorry when one war is over and are anxious for another one. It is they who make the professional soldier-murderer. Some of our soldiers who returned from France were joyful at the prospect of an immediate war with Mexico. And we are told on reliable authority that great disappointment prevailed in a portion of the Allied army on November 11, 1918, when the announcement was made that the armistice had been signed and that no shooting would be permitted after 11 o'clock; some insisted on their "right" to kill exactly up to the minute of 11; and some, it is said, even exceeded the period

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by quite a few minutes. Yes, the world is made up of all sorts of men. And it will not do to repeat hypocritically or sanctimoniously that all men are about equally good and equally bad. They are not. That the bad are not *responsible* for being bad, any more than the good are responsible for being good is true; but that is another question. People are not personally responsible for being tuberculous or leprous, but because of this we cannot deny the existence of tuberculosis or leprosy. Nor can we deny the existence of moral lepers.

Frank was certainly in a receptive mood. He had always been opposed to war, and his warlike attitude was but a temporary episode brought about by the vicious newspaper propaganda; but his opposition to war had been of an emotional character, tinged perhaps with some religious element. Now, however, he began to perceive what an utterly cruel, vicious, immoral and unjustifiable thing war was; and he also began to see what utterly vicious rot all the talk was about war being a necessary evil, or an unavoid-



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able evil; he became convinced of the hollowness of the pseudo-scientific claim that war was the result of some biological "law"; that it was a matter of heredity, and because our ancestors fought we and our descendants will have to fight forever and ever. . . .

## XXII.

Until now Frank's family knew nothing of his whereabouts, nor if he was alive or dead. His letters to his father and to his sister which he had written prior to his second attempt at suicide had been mailed, but inquiries about Frank Brompton brought no response, as the name Frank Brompton was unknown. He enlisted as Frank Smith. It was very cruel of Frank not to write to his mother and sister, but many cruel things are done out of "shame." Frank was ashamed to notify them that he was alive after he had written that he was going to commit suicide. There are few things of which people are so ashamed as of an unsuccessful attempt to put an end to their lives. I knew of the case of a boy who kept his mother

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suffering agonies for several years under the impression that he was dead, because he was ashamed to let her know that at the last moment his courage had failed him and he had not brought to execution his plan of doing away with himself of which he had informed her.

True, Frank had shown that he did not lack courage. Quite the contrary. But, for some reason or other, bungling in an attempt at suicide is considered almost as shameful as funking at the last moment. But Frank's views on many subjects had undergone a radical change, and he saw that what was really shameful was to have kept his family, particularly his mother and his sister, in ignorance of his fate for so many cruel months. And he sat down and wrote a letter to his mother in which he informed her that he was quite well. He wrote a long, long letter to his sister, and he even wrote a friendly letter to his father. His attitude towards his father had also changed; he began to understand, and to understand is to forgive.

The joy in the Brompton household knew no bounds when Frank's letters

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came. The perpetual tension was relieved, the gloom which had reigned uninterruptedly for months disappeared instantaneously, and once more did the Brompton family breathe normally and freely. The father cabled Frank to come home as soon as possible, but Frank replied that he could not do that for several reasons; that he intended to stay in Europe for at least another year. True, he could get his discharge from the army without difficulty, but he wanted to travel and see things for himself; he wanted to read and study; he wanted to attend to many things before he settled down. But he wrote frequently.

His exchange of letters with Malvina became particularly lively. It became his daily delight and recreation to write to Malvina, and her letters were as generous in size and frequency as his own.

I have the letters before me. The temptation is great to publish all or at least a great number of them. The temptation, however, must be resisted, for to print too many letters would throw the story out of focus. But they are all in-

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teresting. I at least have read them with great interest; they are a clear mirror of Frank's soul, showing his gradual evolution from an unthinking, mentally undifferentiated boy, into a strong minded, logical, independent thinker.

My understanding with Frank was this: that while I was to be the sole judge as to what letters to publish, the letters I did publish were to be presented in their entirety, without omissions, elisions or changes of any sort. Those to whom some paragraphs in some of the letters will appear strange or "funny," will please bear this condition of Frank's in mind.

### XXIII.

Dear, dear, dear Malvie:

I have long hesitated before writing you this letter. Your present Frank is so different from the Frank you knew. His ideas have undergone such revolutionary changes, that he is afraid you might repudiate him. And what would he do without you—you the only living human being he has left in the world for whom he cares and to whom he can write

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and tell his thoughts, his hopes, his doubts, his longings? Yes, dear Malvie, I am hesitating to tell you just what I think and what I feel. And yet I *must* do it. Because I have decided that I am through with concealment, I am through with cowardice and hypocrisy. Even with you, my dearest little sister, I could not sail under false colors. I have decided that henceforth the world will have to take me or leave me as I am; I am not going to hide, disguise or lie about my thoughts and my feelings. And so, dear little sister, much as it pains me to shock you, it has to be done, if our intercourse is to be on as frank and honest a plane as I wish it to be. No more cowardly hiding for me.

And so, first of all, I must tell that I no longer believe in a merciful and omnipotent God, such as we were brought up to believe in. I don't know that I believe in any God. And my unbelief is shared by tens of thousands who have been through this hell. I do not see how anyone not a low grade imbecile can believe. Did he want and bring about this war? If so, then he is the most horrible of mon-

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sters. He did not want this war, but was unable to prevent it? Then why do we call him omnipotent? Why do we say that he controls all the events in human life, and that not a hair can fall without his consent? I have asked these questions of at least a dozen clergymen of different denominations, in the English, French and our own army, and not one was able to give me a satisfactory, or even a half intelligent reply. It was everywhere the same: evasion, hemming and hawing. And so, dear sister, having lost my faith in a just and merciful God, theology will no longer serve me as a guide of conduct. I will have to look for another, a higher source of morality. But I believe, I have found it. That source is service to humanity. There came here to the hospital a bundle of books ordered by our chief surgeon. Among them were several books by Dr. William J. Robinson of New York. In one of them (*Eugenics and Marriage*) I came across the following passage:

“My religion is the Religion of Humanity. The ultimate aim of activity

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should be the happiness of the human race. This is the only criterion that should be applied to any man's life work. I recognize no other standard. Whatever contributes to the welfare of the human race, and of its individual members, is right and moral; whatever contributes to its unhappiness and suffering is wrong and immoral. This is my only religion, my only morality. I recognize no other, and I cannot see how any rational thinker can recognize any other standard or guide."

I reread that paragraph again and again, and I know it by heart. And Dr. Robinson's religion is good enough for me. It ought to be good enough for you, and good enough for everybody. If people had believed in, and followed this *human* religion, there would have been no carnage with all its horrors (I still tremble when I visualize what I saw and went through) and civilization would not be hovering over the brink of a precipice. . . .

But greater even than the shock at losing my religion, was the staggering blow I got when I lost my faith in the war. As

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you know, like most Americans, I was sincerely convinced that we were engaged in a righteous war. The day when I murdered Rudolph—I refuse to mince words—my belief in its righteousness received a rude shock; but the shock was of an emotional character. Since then I have read, thought and spoke to a great number of well-informed people, and I have become convinced that our entry into the war was not only unnecessary, and therefore unjustifiable, but that it was the greatest crime in history. It prolonged the war, it cost millions of additional lives, and billions of treasure and it was the cause of the vicious peace of Versailles which is more criminal, more shameless, more dishonorable than the war.

All the time there was one consoling feature: We have an idealistic, a just, a liberal president. At the peace table he will insist on his fourteen points, and will see to it that no injustice be done to any nation, big or small; he will see to it that the world gets a real peace without victory, a peace that will not rankle in the breasts of the vanquished, and that will



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show to the world that the mottos: "Might is right" and "to the victors belong the spoils" are no longer true. But when Wilson came and cynically repudiated every one of the fourteen points, and betrayed every promise, explicit or implied, then my cup of bitterness was indeed full to overflowing. How I wished I could do something to brand that man publicly as a traitor to all human ideals, as a shameless betrayer of the cause of liberalism!

I spoke to a number of English officers—some really fine chaps among them—and they made no secret of the fact that the atrocity stories were deliberately manufactured in order to put "pep" in the soldiers and in order to make the people at home support the war with their dollars and pounds. They said that the Germans behaved like *any other* nation would behave under similar circumstances. They were neither more nor less brutal than the English, French, Americans, etc. I asked them if they thought it was right to so malign another nation, even an enemy nation. They laughed.

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No such a thing as right in war. In war the end justifies the means. Whatever brings the desired results is right. And even the ideals for which we were supposed to be fighting were a sham. It helped to catch the fools. . . . And I really thought that we were fighting for some ideals. . . . Never may you know the agony of revulsion which I felt. . . .

And from unimpeachable documents I learned that Germany wanted peace since 1917, but France and England were opposed to peace because they counted on our unlimited aid. Had we not entered the war, peace would have been concluded in 1917, and the peace would have been a real peace without victory, a more satisfactory peace for all the nations concerned. . . .

I consider my Croix de Guerre and my D. S. O. my badges of shame.

That is the way I feel about the war. Do nevertheless take to your heart your brother who loves you so, take him in spite of his blasphemous and treasonable sentiments. He cannot help them: *he has been in the war*, and has not merely read or

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heard about it. Do not repudiate your brother. He loves you so.

How is H—? I know I shouldn't. But I do so want to hear a word about her.

Frank.

To this letter Frank received the following reply:

Darling Frank, dear blasphemous, treasonable brother of mine. If I have not repudiated you for killing noble Rudolph, I shall certainly not repudiate you for killing your silly illusions about religion and war. I say *your* silly illusions, because they are certainly not mine. The opinions about an all-merciful deity and about the high ideals of the world war which you feared would shock me, have been shared by me for several years. I did not tell you, because I did not want to shock you.

And she enclosed a newspaper clipping which informed him that she was out on bail for having made a speech about our disgraceful behavior in and toward Russia, and for having distributed circulars which demanded that we keep hands off that country.

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And then she proceeded to ask him to come home. "We all want you," she said. "Mother pines for you, father wants you, yes he wants you just as much as mother, perhaps more; Luella wants you, and Helen yearns for you. And don't fear that your ideas would shock her. She read your last letter, and begged me to let her keep it. Which I did. Do come home."

Your Little Malvie.

#### XXIV.

Frank's emotions were conflicting when he received Malvina's letter. He did so want to get a glimpse of Helen, to see her smile, perhaps to feel a touch of her hand. But no. He had gained considerable will-power, and he knew his mind. He felt that for various reasons it would be best for him not to return to the States yet. He wrote to Malvina that his return home at the present time was out of the question.

"I do not wish to see Helen," he wrote. "The struggle would be unbearable. I have gone through many things, but there

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are some things which are beyond my strength. But there is another reason; I am no longer the meek and gentle Frank of three years ago. When I see what the diplomats and the rulers charged with the welfare of their people have done to the world, when I see their stupidity, their callousness to human suffering, I am boiling mad. I feel as if I could put a charge of dynamite under them and destroy the whole lot of them. A little more patience, a little more tact, a little more vision would have prevented the war; instead of that ten million dead and twice as many maimed and crippled. Isn't it enough to make any decent man mad? Yes, I am mad. And hence I am afraid to return home. For I read almost daily of lawless acts by Burleson, of unlawful raids and brutalities committed by Palmer and his henchmen on innocent citizens, on defenseless foreigners and liberals of all shades; I read of the cynical unseating of lawfully elected representatives; I read of kidnappings and deportations; I read of the brutal treatment of political prisoners; I read of the outrage-

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ous sentences imposed by our ferocious judges for the most insignificant offences; I read of the mob violence of the American Legion and the Ku Klux Klan; I read of the sneering at and the trampling upon the Constitution in places high and low; I read of the nauseating asinities of one Senator Lusk and his hired office boy, Stevenson; I read of tarrings and featherings and cruel beatings of innocent people which meet with no protest from our newspapers or officials—I read all these things and I am afraid to go home. For if I were home, I could not remain silent and inactive face to face with those atrocities. I would have to do something, and doing something, even protesting, would bring me quickly within the four walls of an American jail. And that I do not want for several reasons, physical and spiritual. No, I shall stay away another year or two, until our insane war hysteria, with which we were afflicted more severely than any other nation, has subsided, and until we have had a change of administration. It may be better. It certainly could not be worse.

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No administration could be worse than Wilson's.

How is your case? And where and how is Freebird? Was he drafted? Does he write to you?

Your brother, Frank.

"What does he say, Malvie? Is he coming home?" asked the Rev. Brompton.

"No, Father, he is not. Perhaps you'd better read his letter."

After he had read the letter he understood that it was vain to expect Frank home before several years. It was another blow which aged him still more, made his stoop more pronounced, and his walk still slower, still heavier. He was yearning to see Frank, as one might be yearning to see his own youth.

## XXV.

From Malvina to Frank.

Yes, darling Frank, you'd better stay away. What you write is true; but even more and worse is true. The whole nation seems to have gone mad. Decent folks, cultured ladies and gentlemen, have not disdained the role of eavesdroppers,

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spies, spotters and informers. They have disloyalty on their brain, and the mere disbelief in the holiness of our cause, in the necessity of our participation in the war, is considered treason; scepticism as to the atrocities alleged to have been perpetrated by the Germans puts your life in danger, and refusal to buy more Liberty bonds than you can afford is sufficient excuse for tar and feathers. It is awful. And our chief executive, our great liberal, has not a word of protest to utter. No, darling dear, better stay away. If you come, you will only get yourself into trouble without accomplishing any good.

My case? As we are of old pre-revolutionary stock, and as father has friends everywhere, my case will probably be pigeonholed and dropped. But four young Russians—one of them a girl of 18 or 19—have just been sentenced by a brutal monster to twenty years' imprisonment for distributing a circular similar to mine. They protested against our interfering in Russian affairs, against our giving aid to the murderous Kolchak. Think



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of it. Twenty years! If anything, they should have been given twenty days. No, Frank dear, better stay away.

F. B.? He is in Mexico. At least he was when last I heard from him. He disappeared the day we declared war against Germany. A month later I received a note from him. As he could not think of engaging in the business of murder—and killing other people except in self-defence is murder—he would have had to go to jail as a conscientious objector. He objected to jail whenever he could avoid it—and he preferred the pure air and magnificent vegetation of Mexico to our *humane* and well-kept jails. I heard from him last about six months ago—just a postal stating that he was contemplating leaving Mexico for a more interesting country; and since then silence.

Take good care of yourself, darling. The war hysteria will pass, is bound to pass, you have your whole life before you, and you want to be in as good a physical condition as possible. I am happy to hear that you never felt so well in your life. Helen sends her love. Also Mother,

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Luella and Father. He is ailing and is aching to see you. It seems to me this is his only thought. You are the only one that is on his mind.

Your little Malvie.

## XXVI.

A charming village near Paris. Frank was re-reading Malvina's letter by the light of a kerosene lamp, when there was a knock on the door.

"Entrez!"

The door opened, and an old, old man stood before him. Was it—yes, it was his father. He had difficulty in recognizing him, particularly because he seemed so much shorter in stature than he remembered him. The Rev. Brompton fell on Frank's shoulder, embraced him and kissed him. "If the mountain will not come to Mahommed, Mahommed must come to the mountain," he tried to joke, but there was a deep, weary sadness in his voice and in his countenance.

"I haven't been feeling so well of late, Frank. We are all mortal; and I wanted

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to see you before I go. I wanted to explain some things."

And he told him the story of his sojourn in Paris a half century ago.

"You will forgive me, Frank, won't you?"

"There is nothing to forgive, father. If there was anything to forgive, I forgave you long ago. My outlook on things is different. We all do what we cannot help doing. You were not to blame, and what you did, you did with the best of intentions."

"And now another thing," and here the Rev. Brompton handed Frank a draft for twenty thousand dollars. "I want you to feel free and to take things easy. Stay away as long as you like, and take all the time you want to prepare yourself for what you consider is going to be your life work. Don't hurry. There is a bigger amount to your credit in the bank, and there is plenty left for mother and the girls. My life has been a failure—I see it now—but I do not want yours to be one; not if I can help it."

Father and son were inseparable. It

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seemed that the Rev. Brompton could not leave his son for an hour. He felt gloomy and depressed if Frank had to leave him alone. Frank noticed it, and decided to give all his time to his father as long as he stayed in Europe. They motored to the various suburbs, they visited the museums and the libraries together, in the evenings they visited the theatres and restaurants, and in later years Frank looked back to these weeks with his father as some of the pleasantest in his life.

At last the Rev. Brompton's stay in Paris came to an end. It was his last evening with Frank. He had secured passage on the La France, and was to leave on an early train the following morning for Havre. Frank was to accompany him to the steamer. On undressing, he complained of not feeling well, and was seen to wobble. Before Frank could run up to catch him in his arms, he toppled over, dead. No, he was not quite dead. The hastily summoned physicians said it was cerebral hemorrhage. He remained unconscious for forty-eight hours, and then he was gone.

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His face had a placid, peaceful expression. Never did Frank see him so calm and serene in life as he appeared in death. It seemed that he felt gratified that one of his wishes was granted him.

Frank buried him in one of the Paris cemeteries, and ordered a stone with a plain inscription, giving the name and date of birth and death. He felt deep regret at the death of his father; the extent of his affection for him he began to appreciate only now. "Poor father. And so he died in the city in which he had his first human experience. I have a suspicion that he wanted it so."

### XXVII.

"And now I must settle an important point," said Frank. He had been feeling uncommonly well. Never in his life had he felt so fit physically. Never before had he been able to think and to see things so clearly, never had he been able to work so steadily, so intensively without fatigue. "If I didn't know what I do know, I would consider myself one of the healthi-

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est men living. Is it possible? No, it can't be." He went to two of the most eminent specialists in Paris. They tested his blood, they tested his spinal fluid. Both pronounced him absolutely well. The tests showed him to be in a normal, healthy condition. He was not satisfied. Rightly or wrongly, he always had more confidence in German than in French medicine, and so he decided to go to Berlin. There he had his blood and spinal fluid tested again; he had it tested by three different sexologists—one of them was Prof. Wassermann himself—and in each case the Wassermann and other tests were absolutely negative. He asked to be given "provocative" salvarsan injections—the result was the same: negative. He insisted nevertheless upon receiving treatment; two refused, saying that there was no justification for any; a third agreed to give him a few intravenous injections of salvarsan on his own responsibility. The injections did not affect him any; he kept on feeling splendidly. "Now I may venture to do some work."

He wrote to Malvina that he was going

travelling; he wanted to visit every country that had been engaged in the war, whether on the winning or the losing side, he wanted to see things for himself. Malvina got letters from him pretty regularly, then there was an interval of about six months in which she heard nothing from him; all letters addressed to him to his last addresses were marked, "not found." She surmised that if nothing happened to him, he must be in Russia, from which country no letter could get out and into which no letter could get in. And she was very happy when one day she received a letter from him, mailed in a round about way, through a courier, from Switzerland. The letter was written in Moscow.

Dearest Malvie: These have been wonderful six months. Full of hardships, full of danger, full of filth, full of hunger and of thirst, but wonderful nevertheless. And I was again in war, in actual battle. If anybody had told me that I would again don a uniform, that I would again be engaged in the business of murdering my fellow beings, I would have laughed

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at him. But here I was. When I got to Russia and saw things and *understood* what the victory of Wrangel would mean for Russia, I simply could not remain idle and passive. The victory of Wrangel and of the other Czaristic counter-revolutionists would have meant rivers of blood for Russia, the blackest reaction that the world has ever seen, cruelty unimaginable, and a setback for the world at large of half a century or perhaps a century. No, I could not remain idle, I donned a uniform and put myself under the command of Trotzky. I believe that I helped a little towards the defeat of the Baron. My company distinguished itself, and I received the personal congratulations of the Commander-in-Chief. And now I am in Moscow, the capital of the ideal republic. It is wonderful. I believe Lenin is the world's greatest statesman of all times, and Trotzky is a greater strategist than Napoleon. Everybody seems so full of faith, of enthusiasm. And the revolution did it. I have become an out and out revolutionist. I believe the world's salvation consists in social revolution, and in revo-



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lution only. In a day Lenin and Trotsky accomplished what will take other countries centuries to accomplish. I do not like the dictatorship of the proletariat very much; it does not appeal to me, but it is only a temporary expedient, and as soon as all classes are abolished there will be no need of a proletarian dictatorship. It will be a dictatorship of all the people. No petty bourgeois reforms for me. I am an out and out revolutionist. It is a glorious time to live in.

Yours for the Social Revolution,

Frank.

P.S.—And remember this: when I get home I will preach revolution regardless of consequences.

Malvina smiled at her brother's new-born enthusiasm.

There was another silence for several months. And the letter that came was far from being as enthusiastic as the first. "Frank seems to be getting disillusioned," commented Malvina mentally. Another interval of two months and then there came a fat letter, written in and mailed from London.

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Dear Sister Mine, it ran, no use deceiving you or myself. I am deeply disillusioned in Russia. Of course, the physical conditions are horrible; but I could have stood them, I am sure, as well as anybody; but I could not stand certain things, which reminded me too much of the unregenerate capitalistic countries. Evidently, you cannot make a people over in twenty-four hours. And ideal conditions cannot come out of violence, bloodshed and class hatred. I have seen too many things that revolted me. They were too liberal with their prisons. I cannot imagine that things were much worse in this respect under the Czar. The Bolshevik leaders are men of the highest idealism and ready for any sacrifice. But they cannot attend to everything, of course. The execution of things must be in the hands of underlings, and the revolution has not changed human nature, it has not changed the character of the people. Hence one sees a good deal of bribery, graft, favoritism, cruelty and injustice.

And the suspicious attitude which people developed towards their friends and

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neighbors is terrible. Just as in our country during the war everybody who did not wave a flag was a pro-German, so here everybody who has the courage to express an opinion of his own is a counter-revolutionist. And there is no more freedom of press or speech than there was in our own country during the war. Of course, in one sense, Russia is still at war—with external and internal enemies. France and her vassal, Poland, would like to clutch Russia at the throat at the first opportunity, and no doubt there is a justification for many of the repressive measures, but it has all been too much for me. That is not the way I pictured an ideal Socialist republic. Maybe it will be better in a few years—if so, I will return. And I am coming home. And when I am home, I shall not preach revolution, not as a matter of cautious wisdom, but because I do not believe in revolution for the United States, perhaps not for any other country.

And it is not the spectacle of Russia that has made me an opponent of Revolution in America. No. Russia had too many obstacles to overcome, she was in

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a condition of chaos and disorganization even before the revolution. And then came the dastardly blockade. No wonder Russia is tottering. No, it was not Russia that made me see the futility of a revolution or of preaching revolution in a country like the United States. It was Dr. William J. Robinson, of New York. I have quoted him once before, I must quote him again. When I was in Paris the last time, a medical officer who was treating me and with whom I became very friendly, gave me a few copies of one of his magazines, called *A Voice in the Wilderness*, and told me to read them. I put them in the bottom of my trunk and forgot about them. I picked them up one day in Moscow, when time was hanging heavy on my hands, and started to read them. I did not put them away until I had finished every one of the nine copies my medical friend had given me. Why cannot such magazines be circulated by the million? How much mental confusion and general misery would be avoided if this could be brought about! I am alone in the room in this big noisy hotel,

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I have nowhere to go and so I will spend the evening in transcribing for you a few of the passages from Dr. Robinson's *Voice in the Wilderness*. Tell me if you do not think that every one of the statements made is dead right and unanswerable.\*

. . . There is no question about the *right* to revolution; there is no question about a people's right to overthrow its government by peaceful means if it can, by forcible means if it must. But conditions must be ripe, ripe more or less. To incite to insurrection where the government is of the *people's own choice*, and where the *vast majority* of the inhabitants—about 90 per cent. of the population—are in favor of the institutions as they are, is stupid, criminally stupid and therefore immoral. For the results of such preaching or of such an insurrection are merely these; persecution and jail or worse for the preachers, ruthless crushing of the insurrectionists, repressive laws against all liberal and radical movements, even those that do not advocate violence, and in a country like the United States, especially cruel treatment of the foreigner. The ultimate result is not an advancement of the cause of humanity, but a retardation. In other

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\* The gentle reader will again bear in mind that the agreement with Frank was to the effect that his letters would be published in their entirety, without any omissions or not at all.

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words, the activities of radical *extremists* in a country like the United States are more pernicious in their results than are the activities of the vilest reactionaries.

To preach certain doctrines without taking into consideration (1) the economic condition of a people, (2) its historic development, (3) its intellectual level, and last but not least (4) its moral level, and its egotistic vs. altruistic tendencies, is the acme of criminal stupidity. . . .

Let us see:

(1) Economically, the American people as a whole is better off than any other people in the world. It is no use denying it, it is no use lying about it. We are very far from the economic millennium; and there is a heartbreaking amount of wretchedness and poverty, but *compared* with other countries—and most things in this world are relative—the United States is the best off of any. And for people who always talk of economic determinism to overlook this point is unpardonable. We know that the small capitalist, the poor man who has reached a competence, is more tenacious of his wealth and is more furious against any doctrine which he fears will force him to "divide," than is the big capitalist. And America is a country of small capitalists (in addition to the big ones). Not speaking of the enormous middle class, too many American workingmen make a comfortable living, own Liberty Bonds and War-Savings Stamps, have deposits in savings banks, and quite a respectable number are even owners of Fords. And not only

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that. The American workingman is a petty capitalist *in spe*. If he is not a capitalist yet, he hopes to be one some day. And to such people it is futile to preach a violent revolution, as a result of which he *may* be worse off than he is now.

(2) The historic development of the American and his education is such that he is sincerely convinced that he is the highest type of civilized man, that this is by all odds the best and freest country in the world, that to want more liberty is to want too much, that any change in it would be a change for the worse, that all reformers, socialists, etc., are a damned nuisance, and whoever does not like this country ought to get out of it or be kicked out. To preach revolution to such people is futile.

(3) The people's intellectual level. This is rather a touchy point. But the truth must be told. The average American citizen considers himself, because of his ability to write a letter and read the newspaper, a highly intellectual gentleman. True, the most interesting parts in the paper to him are the baseball and race track news, the funny jokes and perhaps the prices of stocks and bonds; nevertheless, just because he is not illiterate, he considers himself intellectually superior to any other nation on earth. If he were told that this is not a universally shared opinion, if he were told that he never thinks, but permits the newspapers, the most vicious as well as the most stupid in the world, to do his thinking for him, he would be a very much surprised and indignant man. But be this as it may, you will admit, that to preach revolution to

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such a person is an extremely foolish task. He considers himself so superior to you that he has only contempt for your attempt to convert him; and his contempt is particularly great, if his collar is whiter and his shoes shinier than yours.

(4) As to the altruism of our people, it is idle to mince words. One need have no hesitation in affirming that the American people is an egotistic and not an altruistic nation; it is selfishly devoted to its own interests, and everybody thinks of nothing but making a living, and getting the best of the next fellow. A nation that considers competition not merely a necessary evil, but an institution to be worshipped, a nation whose chief or only god is material wealth, can not very well be persuaded to risk its wealth as well as its life in an altruistic adventure. Especially if it can *with very good reason* say: why should we resort to violence and bloodshed if we can change our entire structure by peaceful means, by means of the ballot? If there are not enough people to *want* a change, why do you wish to *impose* the change upon them by force? If there are not enough people to vote right, why will there be enough people to shoot right?

A word about the foreign element. Our treatment of the foreigner, particularly the foreigner who has been weak, inoffensive and unable to stand up for himself, has been non-understanding and brutal in the extreme. And a million of him is now following the oft-given advice, "Why don't you go back where you came from?" and is returning to the old country; but it cannot be denied that mil-



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lions did find here opportunities that were entirely closed to them in the countries of their birth, many gained a competence, some became rich, and these people are intensely "loyal" and "patriotic", and reactionary. Though they may not be able to write English and though they may speak it with difficulty, incorrectly or with a decided accent, they generally outdo in their "patriotism" the bluest blooded American whose ancestors came over, really or metaphorically, on the "Mayflower." And such people make, of course, very poor revolutionary timber.

The above considerations make the conclusion *inevitable*, that to preach violence and revolution in this country is to put ammunition into the hands of our enemies, to give them an excuse for raids, for house searches, for arrests, for repressive laws, for continued censorship, for heavy jail sentences and deportations. . . .

And here are some extracts from another one of his articles, entitled War and Revolution.

. . . I abhor war with every drop of blood in my veins, with every fibre of my quivering soul. You all know that. But may it please my ultra-radical friends, I abhor revolution, that is, bloody revolution, almost as much.

"That is temperamental with him—he abhors bloodshed," you will say. Yes, it is temperamental. I am so constituted that I abhor bloodshed, violence, brutality and rowdyism under any circum-

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stances, in any cause. But that is not the only reason for my opposition. I might be opposed temperamentally and still give my intellectual assent to a revolution if I thought it were really for the benefit of mankind. But there are two insuperable objections to bloody revolutions. One is that in order to have a revolution you must have a mob. And a mob is always stupid and always cruel. One day it will stone and shoot its enemies, but the next day it will trample upon, crush and crucify its real saviors.

Every nation unfortunately contains a certain percentage, and the percentage is larger than we think it is, of *cruel, sadistic monsters*. They derive pleasure and satisfaction from the mere infliction of pain and torture. And in any war, as well as in any revolution, those brutes who in ordinary times keep in the background, come to the surface and exercise their brutalities unrestrained. It is unfortunately true, as T. R. said, that every great movement has a fringe of lunacy; and it has a still broader fringe of cruelty. And just as this cruel, conscienceless element is ready to fight on any side in war, so it is equally ready to fight on the side of the revolution or counter-revolution. It cannot be denied, for instance, that many of the infamous wretches who constituted Russia's Black Hundreds in the Czar's régime, quickly joined the Bolshevik movement when they found that the latter were in power, and it is they who throw discredit and dishonor upon the sincere and idealistic leaders of that movement. Should a counter-revolution be

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successful, those same Black Hundreds would forsake the present government and become the most ruthless executioners of Russia's radical elements.

Nor can you get away from the fact, no matter how you try, that in a democracy, even a sham democracy, where there is universal suffrage, the people can, if they wish, make all the changes necessary in a peaceful, orderly manner. Who can prevent the people from casting fifteen or twenty million votes for any candidate they choose? Elect a Congress of their own and make any laws they wish? . . . And my contention is this: If only a minority of the people are in favor of a revolution, then the revolution is apt to fail, act as a boomerang and give the reactionaries greater power. If the actual majority of the people are in favor of revolution, then the revolution, i.e., a revolution of violence, *is no longer necessary*.

Of course, in autocratic countries, where there is no machinery whatever for expressing the people's will, there a revolution is the only method of accomplishing a change, and is justifiable even where there is a risk of failure. But this is not true of countries like England or the United States.

Those who are constitutionally in favor of revolutions like to point to the French Revolution, as if that answered all arguments. There was a time—when I was about fifteen—when I was greatly thrilled by the French Revolution. But I am sorry to say that I am thrilled no longer. The shouting, shooting, and the street barricades, the guillotine working overtime, etc., are not in themselves suffi-

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cient to justify a revolution. We must free ourselves of the romantic glamor, which has surrounded revolutions for so long. Things must be judged by their results. And I am not so sure that humanity at large has gained much, if anything, by the fact of the French Revolution. This is not the place to go into details, examining the losses and gains of that revolution, nor will I refer to the Terror, and to the subsequent reaction which held Europe in its grip for many decades. I will merely call attention to the results of that revolution on the French nation itself. The fruit of the French Revolution after more than a century is a government as imperialistic and as corrupt as that of any monarchical country. It produced a government which actually did make an alliance (yes, an alliance!) with the bloodiest and vilest monarchy in the world, that of the Russian Czar, a government that actually loaned money to the Russian Czar for the purpose of crushing the then beginning Russian revolution, a government which in order to collect that blood-money is opposed to a peace of justice and more than any other nation insists upon bloody intervention in Russia. . . .

England has had no revolution. Is it in any respect more reactionary, more backward, than France? Is it not rather more advanced than that country?

Revolutionary phrases alone are no longer sufficient to enthuse and to thrill me. I would have to be convinced that a revolution is an absolutely necessary step in the upward progress of humanity

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and that the good it accomplishes greatly overbalances its unavoidable evils before I could give it my approval.

Malvina smiled when she read the extracts which Frank had gone to so much trouble to copy; she had read those articles long before, for had she not been getting the Voice in the Wilderness from its first issue? It was Freebird who had subscribed for her.

## XXVIII.

Dearest Malvie: I mailed you a letter this morning and the most important thing I forgot to tell you. Probably was tired out by the long letter.

Oh, yes, the most important thing of all. I'll tell it to you now. When I had finally made up my mind to leave Russia I declared my intention to one of the officials, who had lived in New York, spoke English as well as you or I, and became a great friend of mine. I thought that all I had to do was to say the word, and I would get my passport or permit. I was quickly disillusioned. My friend said he would see what he could do. A week

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passed and he accomplished nothing. He agreed, however, to take me to another official. I had to answer numerous questions, put down my signature on a dozen pieces of paper—and was told that I would be notified. Up to now I do not know why they put so many difficulties in the way of people wishing to leave Russia. I can understand these precautions about admitting people into Russia—they have to keep out plotters and counter-revolutionists. But to let out—I think they ought to be glad to get rid of as many people as possible, particularly foreigners. I still don't understand it. I suppose simply the incubus of bureaucracy. Another week passed, and no developments. I was getting angry. And I was glad then that I was an American, for an American still enjoys more respect than any other National. I began to kick loudly and went from office to office demanding my rights. I finally was told to go to interview Commissar Filips, who had charge of all Englishmen and Americans. I was given a paper which admitted me directly into his august presence.

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When I rather timidly passed through the door which was opened for me by a soldier, and looked at the man at the desk who was busily writing, I nearly collapsed. Collapsed from joy. There, right before me was Freebird. I had completely forgotten, if I ever knew, that his name was Philipps. And if I had remembered, I would not have associated the name with Freebird. In a moment we were shaking hands, happy to see one another in these strange surroundings in the Kremlin. He had been here over two years. He had charge of all American and Western European visitors. We talked and talked and then we shared together our little black sour bread, our watery soup and not particularly appetizing piece of fish.

He was going to stick it out here. There were many things he did not like, but it was a wonderful experiment, the most wonderful experiment in the history of the human race, and he wanted to see it through, as long as he could. There were dangerous fanatics among the Bolsheviks, such as Zinoviev and Mme. Ko-

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lontay; some were fools and were absolutely certain that a revolution was imminent in every civilized country in the world within a few months (as to America, they were not to blame; they were misled by some of our American ultra-revolutionists), there were some cruel people among them who actually hated a cultured man and despised anybody who wore a clean collar, clean shoes and gloves. There were many deplorable things, and yet it will probably work out all right. There were men and women among the communists so exalted, so self-sacrificing, so loving and human that it is doubtful if history has seen their equal. Anyhow, he has thrown his lot in with them and he will stick to the end. "It would be cowardly for anybody with any organizing ability to forsake them at the most critical moment of their struggle. And then it is a matter of *noblesse oblige* for an American to do something to counteract the ignoble, dishonorable work of our fellow Americans. The only Americans that are beloved and admired here are the Quakers or Friends. All the others are despised.



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It is an open secret here that some members of the American Red Cross and even of Hoover's Relief Committee acted as counter-revolutionary agents and spies. They helped the monarchists and the reactionaries wherever they could. We have the facts that it was Hoover's people who crushed the revolution in Hungary and brought about the bloody regime of Horthy." When I expressed some scepticism, he said: "The Bolsheviks do not make any statements unless they have incontrovertible evidence."\*

Time passed rapidly. Of course before I left, I had with me all the necessary credentials, which facilitated my journey to the Latvian frontier very greatly. He gave me something else before I left: a letter for you which I am enclosing. He spoke with great feeling about you. I think he likes you; perhaps more than likes you. He said he thought you would do some good work; he always hoped you

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\* Since then, the article by Capt. Gregory, Hoover's chief representative in Europe, published in *The World's Work* for May and June, 1921, fully bears out Freebird's statement that Hoover's agents acted as counter-revolutionary plotters in Hungary and perhaps elsewhere.

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would give a good account of yourself. Yes, the day passed with good old Freebird compensated me for many gloomy, lonely, cold and hungry days in Moscow. Goodbye and au revoir, darling sister. Love to H.      Your Loving Brother.

#### XXIX.

A fortnight passed since Malvina smiled over Frank's letters; and there he himself stood in the old home in Midvalia. Great was the joy, unfeigned and unrestrained. The mother, Malvina, Luella, who went to meet the steamer, and Helen, who was in the house impatiently awaiting his arrival, could not have enough of him. They expressed their admiration openly, for indeed it was a different Frank from the Frank who had left the paternal house under such tragic circumstances six years ago. He was broader and taller, his skin was bronzed, his muscles were hard—you knew it without feeling them—and courage and determination looked out of his eyes. And the change in his people that greeted his eyes and his senses was equally gratifying. Malvina and Luella were

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beautiful specimens of young womanhood, Helen—on Helen he did not permit his thoughts to dwell; the sight of her set him all aquiver; but the greatest metamorphosis was in his mother; she actually looked several inches taller; she was not the timid and shrinking creature that he left six years ago. Her voice was changed; instead of always being apologetic she spoke with assurance, as if she knew her own mind. And her eyes had completely lost their timid, pathetic look. Many withered wives thus raise their heads and bloom again after they lose their bullying or even kind but domineering husbands. Little did she think that she would yet sometimes possess an individuality of her own, that she would be a welcome companion to her children, and that Frank, to show his strength, would carry her in his arms up the stairs from the dining room to her bedroom.

They had a glorious month, all together. They made trips to the country, went bathing, rowing and sailing together; for a week they roughed it in a camp; they felt gloriously young and

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happy. Helen went wherever they went. She was as one of the family. Dr. Morley grumbled to himself, but said nothing.

And one day Frank said: Enough; we have played enough, now we will do some work for a change. I know pretty well what has taken place in this land of ours during my absence but the information was fragmentary. If I am to be able to judge intelligently and justly of men and affairs, I want to know the facts as well as they can be known with all the accessible sources of information at hand. I want to examine even the sources of misinformation, such as The New York Times, The Current History Magazine, The World's Work, etc. He provided himself with complete sets from 1914 to 1921 of The Nation, The New Republic, The Survey, The Liberator and several others. And for two months he did little else but read and make notes. Malvina and Helen made no demands on him, and only evenings he would emerge for an hour or two to go out for a walk or a ride.

When he was through with his reading

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he thus spoke to Malvie: "I have learned some things I did not know before. We certainly had orgies of lawlessness and mob violence. The pugnacious brute was in his glory. But I have learned something more—something more important to myself. I have found my life work. There is absolutely no salvation for humanity except education, education in the broadest sense, active militant education. And there is no other method of education except through the spoken and printed word. Of the two the printed word is the more important. The militarist, the vicious reactionary have their strongest ally in the press; we have to meet them on their own ground, with their own weapons. But we must work ceaselessly, indefatigably to make any headway. They have hirelings to do their work for them; we must do the work ourselves. And of one other thing I have become convinced; it is not magazines like *The Liberator* that we are urgently in need of; it is papers like *The Nation* and *The New Republic*. Papers like *The Liberator* seldom, if ever, make converts;

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papers like *The Nation* and *The New Republic* often do. And the character of the converts is important. It is not by preaching hatred and class antagonism that the world will be saved; it is by working towards mutual understanding and forbearance that we will get somewhere. Of course, there are some reactionaries, newspaper owners and militarists so vicious, so cruel by nature, so ruthless, that argument with them would be a waste of time; they must be fought, if not by one weapon, then by another. But the majority of conservatives and even reactionaries are well-meaning enough; they are simply ignorant and stupid; we must, if we are to save humanity, enlighten them; we must do that at all costs. We cannot enlighten all of them, but we can enlighten some of them, and perhaps the most influential ones—those who rule this country and thus help to make history. And to reach those people we must have influential, non-partisan, absolutely truthful and confidence-inspiring magazines. *The Nation* and *The New Republic* are of this type. Personally I prefer *The*

Nation. I cannot forgive The New Republic its behavior during the war—not so much its support of the war after it had been declared, but its advocacy of war. The little capital I have—and I see it is not so little—I will use to help the circulation of The Nation. Perhaps I will associate myself with it in an editorial capacity, perhaps I will start a little magazine of our own; I say our own, for you, Malvie, will of course be in it. I read some articles in the magazines which were signed with initials exactly like yours, and which I imagine were by you.”

Malvina nodded.

“Yes, Malvie, prosaic as it sounds, education is the only weapon, the only ultimately successful revolution. I know, it is not so romantic as barricades, cannons, bloodshed, putting against the wall, etc., but war by education is the only war in which both victors and the vanquished win. In all other wars both sides lose.”

“Yes, Frankie, only I could have told you all this long ago.”

“Well, I always claimed that you had more wit and wisdom than I. Yes, it is decided.”

XXX.

That same evening Helen dined with them. At the conclusion of the dinner Malvina, sipping her coffee, innocently and demurely said:

"And now I am going to ask you a question: When are you two people going to get married?" Frank and Helen blushed deeply. They shouldn't have; ultra modern people are not supposed to blush at such a question, but they did all the same. Unshakable is the hold of early traditions. Frank hesitated a moment, and then he said, "I will give an answer to this question a week from today."

On the following day he visited Dr. Daring. The doctor remembered his name and his case well, though he did not recognize him. Frank told the doctor the whole story. "Yes, if all the tests made by the people you name proved negative, then you may consider yourself completely cured. And I believe your severe hemorrhage, which you say amounted practically to exsanguination, following the pistol shot, and the extensive transfu-



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sion practiced on you, had much to do—probably played the principal role—in your complete cure. You see, you really got entirely new blood.”

“Will I test your blood and spinal fluid? It is not necessary; but if it will contribute towards your final conviction that you are all right, I shall do so.”


Again the tests proved completely and unquestionably negative.

“Yes, you may marry with perfect ease of mind. My best wishes for a happy and active life together.”

And so Frank and Helen were married and lived happily ever after. Some married people do live happily ever after.

## XXXI.

### EPILOGUE.

 HE year 1933 will long be remembered for its unusually early Spring. January of that year was like the usual April; February and March were like May, while April was like the month of June. And all the time the weather was so calm, so balmy, and

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yet so bracing. It seemed as if Nature wished to do something to soothe and calm the turbulent agitation of the spirits of the citizens of the United States, male and female. The country had just gone through the most exciting, the most stubbornly fought, the most decisive, the most pregnant campaign in all its history. There were but two parties in the field; everybody felt that the issues at stake were so momentous, that to throw away one's vote on third party candidates or to abstain from voting would be an anti-social act, a moral crime. And the voting was not only absolutely but relatively the heaviest that the country's history had ever witnessed. Everybody, not physically disabled, voted and even many of the disabled managed to be carried to the voting places and to register their votes. It is related that one typhoid patient, whom the doctor had forbidden to leave the bed for a moment, had managed to telephone for a taxi, voted and returned before anybody was aware of his absence. Everybody felt that this was the country's turning point. As said, there were but two parties in the

field—the liberal-radical and the conservative-reactionary. All the small parties merged themselves into one or the other of the two parties.

The time was ripe for a line-up. The war hysteria had completely subsided several years before. Great Britain, Italy, France and Germany were all virtually industrial republics, controlled by vigorous sanely radical parliaments. The people of the United States were gradually beginning to believe that our participation in the war had probably been a grave mistake. Old time bureaucratic diplomacy was seen at its true worth; everywhere it had led the nations to disaster. A change was necessary. But the men of privilege, the militarists, the munition makers fought desperately; and never were their servants, the newspapers, more meretricious, more unscrupulous. But the liberal press had gained great strength, and fought the venal press at every point, exposing its falsehoods and calling upon the people to decide where the truth lay.

And the conservative-reactionary party

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was overwhelmingly defeated. And the country recognized that the lion's share of credit in the defeat of the reactionaries belonged to Frank Brompton. He was truly indefatigable; he published hundreds of pamphlets of which millions of copies were distributed; his editorials in *The Nation* which had now reached a circulation of over a million copies, were read and quoted far and wide, and he travelled from one end of the country to another delivering speeches which acted like sledge-hammer blows and were unanswerable. He had inherited his father's oratorical talent and he made excellent use of it. He encouraged heckling, but few were the hecklers, because he had the uncontrovertible facts with him and he knew how to marshal them. He enjoyed particularly to speak before influential conservative audiences. He converted many of them, for he demonstrated to them that if they did not wish to lose all their property, with their heads, perhaps, in addition, it would pay them to lose some of their property for the common good and most of their special privileges. The peo-

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ple were awake to their rights, and, what was more important, to their power, and it was not wise to push them too hard. And they listened to him with close attention, for they knew he was no demagogue and he had absolutely no axes to grind. His passionate sincerity, his tolerant attitude, his logical presentation of the subject proved invincible weapons.

Yes, a great part of the credit in this historical and epoch-making victory was his. And it was with a feeling of intense and proud satisfaction that he reviewed the arduous campaign, while gently swinging in the hammock hung between two giant oaks in the garden of his home at Midvalia. He heard children's voices; a boy of six and a girl of five ran up to him.

"Daddy, Marie says that you are now President of the United States. You are only Secretary, are you not?"

"Yes, Rudolph dear, I am only Secretary."

Marie seemed displeased and disappointed.

"Don't mind, dear, maybe next time

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they will elect me president." She was satisfied. She climbed in the hammock.

"Kiss me, Daddy," and she skipped away, dragging Rudolph with her. "Let us go to Aunt Malvie's." For Aunt Malvie—Mrs. Malvina Freebird Philipps—lives but a step away.

But Aunt Malvie is busy packing. She and Freebird are to go away in a few days on a far, far journey—to Russia. Russia is peaceful and prosperous, and Freebird who knows the country as no other American does, having spent there a dozen years, speaking the language like a native and enjoying the love and respect of all Russians for his services to them in their darkest hours, has been logically nominated by the new president as Ambassador to The Russian Socialist Republic. So Malvie is busy packing and Helen is helping her.

"Sorry to leave?"

"Yes, in a way. I have become too much attached to Midvalia. But it is a new adventure, new people, new customs. I long wanted to visit Russia, Freebird's second fatherland."

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"And soon I will have to do my own packing," says Helen. "Frank enters upon his duties in a fortnight. But of course Washington is not Moscow. But are we not living in glorious times? Think of it—a radical like Frank—Secretary of State, a queer Bohemian like Freebird, who still refuses to wear a starched collar—ambassador. And a radical editor—President of the United States. Yes, it is glorious, and we are only at the threshold of it. Do you think, Malvie Freebird, that we would have reached the point where we are now, quite so soon without the war?"

"I don't know, Helen dear, but somehow I cannot believe that anything good can ever come out of evil. And war is the greatest of all evils."

September 17, 1921.

THE END.

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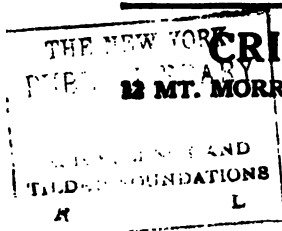
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